

*Psychologische Musik*, Joseph Joachim, and the Search for a New Music Aesthetic

in the 1850s

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy, in the Department of  
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2014

ABSTRACT

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## Abstract

Exploring two main lines of inquiry, this dissertation investigates the style and aesthetic of the music of Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) and its references to composers such as Brahms, Liszt, Schumann, and Beethoven. First, rather than simply accepting the image of Joachim as the great nineteenth-century violinist and collaborator of Johannes Brahms who advocated the “canonization of the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms,” I ask who Joachim was in light of his own compositions and literary circle. Especially significant was his “soul mate” Gisela von Arnim (daughter of Bettine von Arnim), from the second generation of two major literary “institutions” – the Grimm brothers and Arnim/Brentano, the *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*-collectors. Joachim and Gisela’s literary role-play throws light on her function as his inspiration and muse. Second, each chapter investigates Joachim’s works as “psychological music,” the term he himself applied. Given that psychology was not yet an established academic discipline in the 1850s, Joachim’s use of “psychological” is all the more intriguing.

Sources including archival letters, manuscripts, and Joachim’s published correspondence, as well as his compositions from (or begun) in the 1850s, reveal that “psychological music” was both a compositional approach and an aesthetic. Extensively using ciphers, anagrams, song quotations, literary titles and allusions, and occasionally



melodramatic elements, Joachim's *compositional* aesthetic conflicted with his "absolute" aesthetic as a *violinist* in the later 19th century.

Joachim's relatively strict use of form, his idiosyncratic use of "motivic transformation," and his expressive studies of literary/historical characters in his overtures separated him from Liszt. Furthermore, while Joachim navigated harmony in ways criticized by Louis Spohr and contemporary critics as "ear-tearing harshness" (1852), the composer maintained an almost consistently symmetrical ("four-square") syntax. Joachim's "psychological" aesthetic was typified by idiosyncratic, individual stylistic features like "trapped motives," captured by (sometimes obsessive) repetition, and he applied ciphers much more conspicuously than did Schumann. In the end, Joachim's "psychological music" displays three overarching features: first, extramusical programs from autobiographical and/or literary contexts; second, the implicit or explicit dedication of the works to Gisela von Arnim; and third, supporting correspondence marking the work as an "outlet" for Joachim's self-perceived, psychological inner turmoil.

## **Dedication**

For Sven, Sanja, Michael, Tatjana, David, Gabriel, and Carmello.

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## Introduction

Today remembered as one of the seminal violinists of the nineteenth century, Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) was also, especially in the earlier part of his career, an active composer, and, more precisely, a composer of *Psychologische Musik*. The intriguing term “Psychologie der Töne” appears in Joachim’s letters, and Sir Donald Tovey reported that he had heard the musician describe his compositions as “psychological music.”<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, Tovey left few details concerning what the composer meant. His friendship with Joachim, to be sure, dated from around 1900, decades after Joachim’s most active compositional career, which peaked in the 1850s. For various reasons, “psychological music” was then not further illuminated and hence remained a mystery for Tovey, and the days when it was born in Weimar, in the company of Liszt, Berlioz, and Bülow (and, through correspondence, Wagner) remained obscured.

The music Joachim wrote during the 1850s, and his extensive correspondence about it, however, affirm that it had to do with his compositional approach – an intense diary-like process – in which one woman was of peculiar importance as his inspiration or muse. She was Gisela von Arnim (1827-1889), daughter of Bettine von Arnim (1785-1859), the author of *Goethes Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde* (1835). Based on Tovey’s remarks

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 6 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), V:230.

about “psychological music,” interest in this compositional approach has been reawakened in recent years, but significantly without full knowledge or consideration of Joachim’s own usage of the term “psychological.”

The associations Joachim brought to “psychological music” came from different disciplines. In the 1850s psychology *qua* psychology was not yet established, and not until 1879 did it emerge as a separate academic discipline based on empirical study.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand psychological music seems to have included a phenomenological component, for Joachim was unusually perceptive about his compositional approach. In brief, he sought to detect his emotions with an almost empirical attitude and render them into music, thereby creating manifestations in tones that reflected his interior world, in some occasions in the form of specific musical allusions pointing to an autobiographic program. Composing in that vein, by “detecting his emotions and saving them from the abyss,”<sup>3</sup> brought Joachim relief from his troubled emotional condition related to his romantic relationship with Gisela. Not only his inner turmoil, but also his blissful states of inspiration were associated with her.

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<sup>2</sup> The figure associated with the birth of modern psychology is Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), instrumental in founding the first official laboratory for empirical psychological research at the University of Leipzig.

<sup>3</sup> Johannes Joachim, *Joseph Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim, 1852-1859* (Göttingen, 1911), hereinafter *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 97, letter of April 23, 1856.

The works examined in this dissertation include two overtures, the violin pieces Op. 5, a piano piece written for a melodramatic pantomime scene, and a violin concerto. As Beatrix Borchard tells us, “Joachim counted his G-major [Violin] Concerto in its first unpublished version [1854], as well as the Overture to *Hamlet* and his three *Violin Pieces* Op. 5 among the Gisela-pieces, which he originally wanted to publish together.”<sup>4</sup> We discuss these works in Ch. 6 (Violin Concerto in G major), Ch. 2 (Overture to *Hamlet*) and Ch. 1 (*Abendglocken*, Op. 5 No. 2). But other works of Joachim – the *Demetrius* Overture (Ch. 3) and the piano piece *Versuch eines Tanzes* (Ch. 5) were also dedicated to Gisela, informally. In one instance Joachim made that clear in a letter to her, and in the other instance Gisela commissioned Joachim to compose a piece for a pantomime. It would not be a stretch, therefore, to extend the definition of the “Gisela-Stücke” to these other pieces and, in fact, to most of Joachim’s works composed in the 1850s. For as this dissertation shows, Joachim’s approach to composition was uniquely bound up with her, which is demonstrated compellingly by the letters the two exchanged between 1852 and 1859. According to Borchard, Joachim’s letters to Gisela are “confessional” (“bekenntnishaft.”)<sup>5</sup> And furthermore, although one of Tovey’s remarks concerning

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<sup>4</sup> “Joachim zählte sein *G-Dur Violinkonzert* in einer ersten unpublizierten Fassung, wie die *Hamlet-Ouvertüre* und die drei *Violinstücke* op. 5, zu den Gisela-Stücken, die er ursprünglich zusammen herausgeben wollte.” Beatrix Borchard, *Stimme und Geige. Amalie und Joseph Joachim* (Wien: Böhlau, 2005), 135-136 [hereinafter Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*].

“psychological music” pertained to the *Overture to Herman Grimm’s Demetrius* (1853-54) while the other concerned the *Hungarian Violin Concerto* (1857), evidence suggests that from 1852 to the end of the decade Joachim’s approach, from a qualitative standpoint, did not change much, so that we may with some justification treat his “psychological music” as referring to Joachim’s compositional outlook throughout the 1850s (or, because he revised some early works later in his career, to works *begun* in the 1850s during his romantic infatuation).

Because Joachim’s output is uniquely situated during the years approaching the great stylistic debate of the century, the “war of the romantics,” discerning and defining his aesthetic stance is at once a difficult and fascinating pursuit. After 1854, with the publication of Hanslick’s *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, and certainly after 1860, historians tended to polemicize and separate, to over-simplify and categorize, where a composer “belonged” stylistically, a tendency still not yet entirely overcome, as is evident from the many attempts to situate Joachim’s style. “Between a and b” has been a recurring theme in musicological research on Joachim’s compositional language. Indeed, his music has

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<sup>5</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 40.

been viewed, stylistically, as “between Schumann and Wagner,”<sup>6</sup> “between Liszt and Schumann”<sup>7</sup> and between the “strictness of Mendelssohn and the freedom of Liszt.”<sup>8</sup> This approach, besides being subject to the flaws of what Dahlhaus dismissed as “Heroengeschichte,”<sup>9</sup> does not tell us much about Joachim’s own aesthetic.

Although, Tovey found in one analysis of Joachim’s music, “we need not trouble ourselves about questions of ‘programme music,’” this dissertation acknowledges that Tovey’s and other authors’ remarks around 1900 (such as those of Andreas Moser) were influenced by the still living musician (known no longer principally as a composer but as a violinist). By the end of the nineteenth century Joachim had become an icon of “art religion” (“Kunst-Religion”)<sup>10</sup> represented in the concert halls by the music of the “three

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<sup>6</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 40, No. 14 (1854).

<sup>7</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 119.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Eshbach, “Der Geigerkönig: Joseph Joachim as Performer,” *Die Tonkunst* 1, No. 3 (July 2007): 205.

<sup>9</sup> There is a tendency in the writing of nineteenth-century music history to “chain together” the “monographs of prominent composers,” leading Dahlhaus to observe that “the music history of the nineteenth century is still primarily a history of heroes.” (“[Es gab die Tendenz] Monographien über herausragende Komponisten aneinanderzureihen. [Die Musikgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts ist] immer noch primär [...] Heroengeschichte.”) Carl Dahlhaus, *Zwischen Romantik und Moderne* (München: Emil Katzibichler, 1974), 5.

<sup>10</sup> Beatrix Borchard, “Von Joseph Joachim zurück zu Moses Mendelssohn. Instrumentalmusik als Zukunftsreligion?” in *Musikwelten-Lebenswelten. Jüdische Identitätssuche in der deutschen Musikkultur*, Beatrix Borchard and Heidy Zimmermann, eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009), 39.

B's," as Bülow later in life called the triad of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, complemented by a few other composers. Indeed, part of this dissertation's goal is to separate the violinist's aesthetic from Joachim as a composer. As recent research on Joachim's "cultivated public identity"<sup>11</sup> has suggested, his goal as a public figure was to perform music in a manner that created the illusion of a fusion between performer and composer,<sup>12</sup> avoiding anything "conspicuously superficial."<sup>13</sup> But while a recent study has viewed this comment as one reason why Joachim refrained from offering explicit programmatic signifiers in his works, unlike some composers of the New German school,<sup>14</sup> as we shall see, in his case turning inward – by composing "psychological music" – did not rule out extramusical representation in his aesthetic.

This dissertation focuses on Joachim's aesthetic before the heated journalistic debates shortly after mid-century and assumes that Joachim did not take sides as some

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<sup>11</sup> Karen Leistra-Jones, "Virtue and Virtuosity: Brahms, the Concerto, and the Politics of Performance in the Late-Nineteenth Century" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2011), 81-82, 125, 146.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 133. Leistra-Jones cites Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *Joseph Joachim* (New York: J. Lane, 1905), 8.

<sup>13</sup> "Es scheint mir, daß alles äußerlich Auffallende gerade von genialen Naturen jetzt vermieden werden müsse." Andreas Moser, ed., *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms-Gesellschaft, 1908), I:47, letter of June 27, 1854.

<sup>14</sup> Beatrix Borchard, "Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik," in *Schumann Forschungen 7. "Neue Bahnen." Robert Schumann und seine musikalischen Zeitgenossen*, ed. Bernhard R. Appel (Mainz: Schott, 2002), 207.

biographers and Tovey seem to suggest when they strike an apologetic tone in discussing works such as the *Hamlet* Overture (Ch. 2), arguably one of the more Weimar-inspired works. Indeed, what recent Joachim monographs and articles have not recognized is the extent to which Joachim's work engages extramusical realms, which, however, was not only the result of his Weimar sojourn. Joachim's aesthetic outlook was related to his literary interests and intellectual activities, so that his "psychological music" not only alluded to strictly speaking "programmatic" ideas (for lack of a better word) but also responded to ideas anchored in the works of literary figures surrounding him. Joachim's programmatic interest, at least in part, grew from having been "adopted" into one of the most significant literary "institutions" of German romanticism – the circle of the Grimm brothers (the collectors of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*), Bettine von Arnim, her daughter Gisela von Arnim, and her fiancé Herman Grimm.<sup>15</sup> Although Beatrix Borchard, Robert Eshbach, and Andreas Meyer, among others, have acknowledged the crucial significance of Gisela von Arnim in Joachim's (personal) life<sup>16</sup> and noted Bettine

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<sup>15</sup> Gisela's all but officially announced fiancé since her teenage years was Herman Grimm, son of Wilhelm Grimm of the Grimm brothers (married to Gisela in 1859), while Gisela's father, Achim von Arnim, was one of the two collectors of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and Gisela's mother, Bettine von Arnim, was the sister of Clemens Brentano, the other collector of the latter work. Gisela's great grandmother, lastly, was Sophie von La Roche.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Eshbach, "Verehrter Freund! Liebes Kind! Liebster Jo! Mein einzig Licht. – Intimate letters in Brahms's *Freundeskreis*," *Die Tonkunst* 2, No. 2 (April, 2008): 178.

von Arnim's influence on his aesthetic ideas,<sup>17</sup> none has deduced from his romantic relationship a specifically literary influence manifested in his collaborations. We should add that unfortunately no recent scholarly monograph on Gisela von Arnim exists – one biography from 2004 lacks academic citations, while the only monograph is an unpublished dissertation from 1925,<sup>18</sup> supplemented by an article published in 1900.<sup>19</sup> To rectify partially this lacuna, Chapters 4 and 5 base their arguments in part on some critical information gleaned from her unpublished letters.

But one essential strand of this dissertation, highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5, remains to be mentioned. One aspect of Joachim's literary cultural milieu intersects with his psychological and literary interests, his embedding in Gisela von Arnim's literary circle, and his heavily autobiographical mode of creativity. What is more, this strand helps to contextualize "psychological music" as truly inseparable from Joachim's subjective experience related to Gisela. It is the myth of "Cupid and Psyche," most

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Eshbach, "Joachim's Youth – Joachim's Jewishness," *The Musical Quarterly* 94, No. 4 (2011): 573.

<sup>18</sup> Luba Dramaliewa, "Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen" (PhD diss., Universität Leipzig, 1925).

<sup>19</sup> Edmund Goetze, ed., section on Gisela von Arnim in "Phantastische Dichtung," in *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen von Karl Goedeke*, 7 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1900), VII:78-89.



famously handed down in the West through Apuleius, and directly relevant to Joachim's relationship with Gisela.

This myth can enlighten Joachim's psychological music in two ways: on the one hand "Psyche" (soul) is the etymological root of "psychology," while on the other hand in the 1850s it had a distinct association with "Psyche," understood in terms of the myth of "Cupid and Psyche," which had been ubiquitously represented in literature and art for centuries, most famously by Canova, Raphael, Angelika Kauffmann, Herder, Jean Paul,<sup>20</sup> and, last but not least, Bettine von Arnim. Regarding the first point: when one early nineteenth-century author wrote that "the name Psyche signifies a butterfly as well as the soul" – emphasizing that "the most tender concepts of death and life are woven into this poem"<sup>21</sup> – he revealed that "Psyche" (and "Psychology") was partly defined culturally, and even mentioned in early manuals on "psychology" and the development of the soul.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Christiane Holm, *Amor und Psyche. Die Erfindung eines Mythos in Kunst, Wissenschaft und Alltagskultur [1765-1840]* (Berlin/München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 282, fn. 157. [source abbreviated hereinafter as *Amor und Psyche*]

<sup>21</sup> Karl Philipp Moritz in *Götterlehre* (Berlin: Friedrich August Herbig, 1825), cited in Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 169. "Der Name Psyche bedeutet sowohl einen Schmetterling als auch die Seele. – Die zartesten Begriffe von Tod und Leben sind in diese Dichtung eingewebt."

<sup>22</sup> Plato's ideas about love/soul were part of the cultural heritage – of the world of ideas – that shaped and influenced the creation and development of early and modern psychology. His ideas had an influence on the myth of "Cupid and Psyche," and the way this myth was understood.

With regard to the other meaning of “Psyche” – the female mythological figure – it appears that Joseph Joachim and Gisela von Arnim cultivated an eighteenth-century tradition of literary role-play based on “Cupid and Psyche,” and carried out through correspondence a tradition also documented in the letters of Goethe, Bettine von Arnim, Angelika Kauffman, Herder, and many others. The myth of “Cupid and Psyche” lent itself to this tradition of role-play especially well – not least because of its erotic undertones. That Psyche, as featured in Bettine von Arnim’s literary and artistic work, including her numerous *Denkmal* sketches and models, was also a *metaphor for a partnership* in which the artist Bettine projected herself as Goethe’s muse and through this projection found inspiration, not least for her *Goethes Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde*, is another way to understand the role that Gisela played for Joachim, with whom she continued the tradition inherited from her mother. Above all the myth alludes to a love story, which for Gisela was one reason why she chose it – “The saga of Psyche is certainly one of the most heavenly love stories on earth,” Gisela wrote to Joachim.<sup>23</sup>

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Both Plato’s ideas and the myth had an influence on the thinking of nineteenth-century figures, like Carl Gustav Carus, who developed psychology as an academic discipline.

<sup>23</sup> “Die Sage der Psyche ist sicher eine der Göttlichsten Liebesgeschichten die es auf Erden gibt,” Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs-#10472a.

Two leading Joachim scholars, Beatrix Borchard and Robert Eshbach, have published a valuable monograph and numerous articles on Joachim (the former from the point of view of “Interpretationsgeschichte”), respectively. They do not, however, address how to discuss Joachim’s compositions from a stylistic and analytical standpoint. While their recent work<sup>24</sup> discusses Joachim’s psychological style and reasons for its “failure,”<sup>25</sup> neither has yet put forward an analytical case study of Joachim’s music that focuses in depth on his *Psychologische Musik*, which, even if it ultimately failed, nevertheless provides for us today valuable new perspectives on the early 1850s. Furthermore, Borchard’s article about “psychological music,” titled “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik,” is the only scholarly work about Joachim’s compositional approach.<sup>26</sup> Remarkably, Borchard manages to describe Joachim’s “psychological music” aesthetically, acknowledging its slight New German tilt, without offering supporting analytical or interpretive evidence from any of Joachim’s works. Her claim that Joachim’s *Psychologische Musik* can be “equated” to a “compositional technique” in search of music “with short, characteristic themes and motives that do not change

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<sup>24</sup> Eshbach, “Der Geigerkönig: Joseph Joachim as Performer.”

<sup>25</sup> Borchard, “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik.”

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

rhythmically or in intervallic structure, but appear in new light again and again through a different harmonization, change in tempo or beat, and especially in instrumentation”<sup>27</sup> was presumably made in light of the *Hamlet* Overture – which is, motivically speaking, indeed, closest to Liszt’s technique of thematic transformation. But other works of Joachim, such as the *Demetrius* Overture, the Violin Concerto in G Major, and *Abendglocken*, differ conspicuously with regard to thematic, motivic, and harmonic usages, and need to be considered separately from Joachim’s *Hamlet* Overture.

Furthermore, Borchard’s general remark that locates *Psychologische Musik* “between the concept of a Schumannian poetic music and a Lisztian concept of program music”<sup>28</sup> can be altered slightly to clarify Joachim’s aesthetic position in light of our new analytical and contextual findings. We could say that the *Demetrius* and *Hamlet* Overtures exemplify “psychological music” as located between a Lisztian literary program and a Schumannian layer of autobiography, without, however, withholding a significant tribute to sonata form – a sign of Joachim’s reverence for Beethoven’s classical structures, which is present in the majority of Joachim’s compositions.

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<sup>27</sup> “Arbeit mit kurzen, charakteristischen Themen und Motiven[,] [welche] [...] rhythmisch und in der Intervallstruktur unverändert [...] aber immer wieder durch andere Harmonisierung, Wechsel in Tempo und Takt und vor allem in der Instrumentierung neu beleuchtet [werden].” Borchard, “Psychologische Musik,” in *Stimme und Geige*, 121.

<sup>28</sup> Borchard, “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachim’s Konzept einer psychologischen Musik,” 229.

Lastly, recent research suggests that Joachim found his compositional identity by rejecting Liszt's New-German aesthetic and his own Lisztian influences absorbed during his Weimar sojourn in 1850-1852 (for Borchard, an "Identitätsfindung über Abspaltung").<sup>29</sup> This dissertation, in contrast, suggests that his compositional identity was very much dependent on Gisela von Arnim, and that the separation from her in the late 1850s resulted more in a "splitting" ("Spaltung") of Joachim's creativity than the current aesthetic debates of his time pulled him toward a "splitting-off" ("Abspaltung") from Liszt, although certain obstacles in his relationship to the latter are undeniable.

The idea of psychology was in the air much longer before the term began being used by musicians and composers, or, for that matter, by general readers. The philosophical debates of the British empiricists in the eighteenth century, followed by Kant, centered on ideas that were groundbreaking, and although the term "psychology" was part of these concepts, not until later in the nineteenth century did psychology split truly from philosophy. But already in the early decades of the nineteenth century, "psychology" or related words slowly began to appear in musical criticism. Thus, A. B. Marx noted already in 1824, in his article "Concerning the Symphony and Beethoven's Contributions in This Field," appearing in the *Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*:

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<sup>29</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 129.

From an indefinite lyricism, as we were accustomed to find in earlier and Mozart's symphonies, emerged in the first place Beethoven's C-minor symphony, still sounding lyrical, only not a feeling, but rather portraying a series of soulful states with deep psychological truth. It is the wrestling of a powerful creature against an almost overwhelming destiny.<sup>30</sup>

According to Holly Watkins, "[the] concepts Marx applied to musical form need to be understood in relation to broader developments in German psychology, aesthetics, and nationalist polemics."<sup>31</sup> Psychological music, in fact, shares aesthetic features with Watkins' recent work on metaphors of "depth" in nineteenth-century German music, influenced by figures of early psychology (still mostly philosophers) such as Johann Friedrich Herbart. The topos of depth, as Watkins has shown, is "a widely employed trope [...] in German-language music criticism and analysis,"<sup>32</sup> and Joachim's aesthetic – although influenced not by Herbart but, as Ch. 1 will show, by another psychologist/philosopher – can be understood as a related manifestation of Watkins' "widely employed" trope of "depth."

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<sup>30</sup> "Aus einer unbestimmten Lyrik, wie wir sie in frühern und Mozartschen Symphonien zu finden geglaubt haben, ging zunächst Beethovens C-moll-Symphonie hervor, noch der Lyrik angehörend, allein nicht ein Gefühl, sondern eine Folge von Seelenzuständen mit tiefer psychologischer Wahrheit darlegend. Es ist das Ringen eines kräftigen Wesens gegen ein fast übermächtiges Geschick." A. B. Marx, ed., *Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, No. 20 (May 19, 1824): 174.

<sup>31</sup> Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 52.

<sup>32</sup> Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*, i.

But Joachim's usage of the term "psychological" is nevertheless unusual even in the 1850s, as "psychology" – somewhere between an expired philosophical, but not yet scientific concept – was still, at least for most, not yet self-explanatory. An 1855 article by a contemporary "psychologist" appeared (in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* 49, No. 21) on "mathematische Psychologie," written in the wake of Johann Friedrich Herbart's much earlier *Über die Möglichkeit und Nothwendigkeit, Mathematik auf Psychologie anzuwenden* (*On the Possibility and Necessity of Applying Mathematics to Psychology*, 1822). Here the author speaks of the "indubitable reality that of the enormous progress, yes actually of the new start of the psychological science in our century, only slight and unclear information has been divulged to the cultured public," and furthermore impresses on the general reader that "knowledge of ourselves, understanding our own being and actions" is why the topic, without any "external consideration or utility" should interest everyone. And although the author adds that the soul, of all things, is unfathomable ("in the inner self no creative spirit presses on nature, because it lies, as does all nature, inevitably outside us as part of the outer world"), psychology suggests that, "now man is also a piece of nature, a link in its chain, and here he is part of its inner world, he is the inner world, and looking at himself and *observing* he sees nature and its law."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "[Es ist eine] unzweifelhafte Tatsache, daß von den ungeheuren Fortschritten, ja eigentlich von

Empirical studies were in the air, which, most broadly speaking, had to do with observing (analyzing) experience. Theodor Fontane addressed this element: "What characterizes our time from all sides is its realism. Doctors discard all keys and combinations; they want experiences."<sup>34</sup> In a similar vein Kevin C. Karnes explains that Hanslick's writings on music (*On the Musically Beautiful*) were essentially aiming to elucidate music from a scientifically inspired angle, advancing "a mode of investigation" – and to some extent the methods – that aimed at empirical observation.<sup>35</sup> Although

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dem neuen Anlauf der psychologischen Wissenschaft in unserem Jahrhundert dem gebildeten Publikum nur erst eine geringe und unklare Kunde geworden ist"; . . . "das Wissen um uns selbst, die Kenntnis unseres eigenen Wesens und Wirkens"; . . . "ohne äußere Rücksicht oder Nützlichkeit." "In's Innere der Natur dringt kein erschaffener Geist"; "Nun, der Mensch ist auch ein Stück Natur, ein Glied in ihrer großen Kette, und hier ist er selbst in Ihrem Innern, ist selbst das Innere, und sich selber schauend und betrachtend sieht er die Natur und ihr Gesetz" [my italics]. M. Lazarus, "Mathematische Psychologie," *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* 49, No. 21 (May 1855): 481.

<sup>34</sup> "Was unsere Zeit nach allen Seiten hin charakterisiert, das ist ihr Realismus. Die Ärzte verwerfen alle Schlüsse und Kombinationen, sie wollen Erfahrungen." Theodor Fontane, "Unsere lyrische und epische Poesie seit 1848," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Kurt Schreinert (München: Nymphenburger, 1963), XXI: 354.

<sup>35</sup> Kevin Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), he cites Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2002), 357.



what these methods were remained vague,<sup>36</sup> not least because of the difficulty in addressing the subjective from a scientific angle, whether the subject was, as in Hanslick, the “aesthetically beautiful,” or, as in Joachim’s case, an interest in “psychological music,” the term he used to describe his music.

In short, Joachim and his contemporaries were driven by a dawning science-based interest into the inner emotions and depths of the soul, into which music had a capacity to reach. To Schopenhauer and his contemporaries, as Holly Watkins has remarked, “[m]usic was uniquely equipped to penetrate the innermost regions of the soul, an ability that Enlightenment aesthetic theory, with its focus on the representation of universalized, impersonal feelings, had failed to explain.”<sup>37</sup>

Because Joachim’s psychological music involved a candid observing and reflecting on his inner world and compositional approach, we cannot draw a serious parallel to the older treatises of “Gefühlsästhetik” mentioned and despised by Hanslick. Indeed, the rationality and particular vocabulary – as well as the emphasis on *impact* (Wirkung) of the baroque aesthetic of affects – had little to do with Joachim’s composer-based approach. While feeling and *Empfindung* play a significant role in this dissertation,

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<sup>36</sup> Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna*, 6.

<sup>37</sup> Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*, 2.

“Gefühlsästhetik” remains tangential. Joachim’s work, rather, parallels contemporary manifestations of “psychological” art and literature, elicited by the dawning age of psychology, as Friedrich Sengle has analyzed:

In 1824/1825 J. F. Herbart’s *Psychologie als Wissenschaft* appeared, in 1846 Hermann Lotzes’s *Seele und Seelenleben*. The “psychological art” of Grillparzer, Heine and Büchner, yes, even of Gotthelf and Stifter, found in the contemporary interest in psychology a tremendous basis and inspiration; the type of knowledge not yet relativized to an “academic science” often has the greatest impact on other cultural areas.<sup>38</sup>

In terms of methodologies, this dissertation relies on biographical interpretation and musical study (compositional process, analysis, and interpretation). Concerning the first: Joachim left an enormous amount of letters – to Gisela, to his brother Heinrich, and to his wide circle of friends. By far the most insightful for the purpose of investigating “psychological music” are the letters from Joachim to Gisela, as well as the few preserved letters from Gisela to Joachim, of which the majority remain unpublished and are now kept in the Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt. Few scholars have looked at Gisela’s letters, thereby missing a trove of valuable literary and cultural insights about Berlin in the 1850s – particularly in relation to the genre(s) of ballet/pantomime, which

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<sup>38</sup> “1824/25 erschien J. F. Herbarts *Psychologie als Wissenschaft*, 1846 Hermann Lotzes *Seele und Seelenleben*. Die ‘psychologische Kunst’ Grillparzers, Heines und Büchners, ja selbst Gotthelfs und Stifters, findet im psychologischen Interesse des Zeitalters eine mächtige Basis und Anregung; denn eben das noch nicht ganz zur ‘Fach-Wissenschaft’ relativierte Wissen wirkt oft am stärksten auf andere Kulturgebiete.” Friedrich Sengle, *Die Biedermeierzeit. Deutsche Literatur im Spannungsfeld zwischen Restauration und Revolution 1815-1848*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Metzlersche Buchhandlung, 1971), I:38-39.

relates directly to Joachim, whom she asked to write music for her. This dissertation makes a special effort to cast new light on these artistic efforts. They reveal Joachim not only as deeply interested in literature but also as a composer of works written for the stage, thereby also showing us an unexpected side of his compositional interests.

Joachim's letters to Gisela reveal that his compositional approach in the 1850s could not have existed without her – at least not with the same productivity. That the tone of his letters is intimate – they were only meant for Gisela – and is truly psychological in today's sense of the word, creates certain difficulties in discussing them. Distinguishing where Joachim's language is pragmatic and objective, and where it taps into a deeply romantic language reminiscent of Jean Paul's fiction is not always clear, as has been recognized.<sup>39</sup> But the other difficulty is that they are plainly very autobiographical. Dealing with this raised level of subjectivity, this dissertation sometimes struggles with how closely Joachim's thought and ideas should be taken into account when discussing his music. My methodology has aimed at a balance between accommodating Joachim's subjectivity, so tightly enmeshed in his compositional approach, and stepping back from it to analyze his music from some critical distance. But if the dissertation tends to cede more room to the autobiographical element – mostly outside the analytical sections – this decision reflects the influence of Borchard and

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<sup>39</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 40.

Constantin Floros who have validated such an approach, the former in relation to Joachim, the latter in relation to Schumann, whom we cite below. Borchard has described Joachim's music as revealing a particular "biographical presence,"<sup>40</sup> while Floros, citing Schumann, offers the following:

As concerns the difficult question in general, how far instrumental music can be allowed to proceed in the representation and depiction of thoughts and events, many seem here to be too anxious. One is certainly mistaken if one believes that composers set out their pen and paper with the poor intention of expressing this or that, to depict, to paint. Still, one should not underestimate coincidental influences and impressions from the outside. Often an idea works unconsciously along with the musical imagination, next to the ear, the eye, and this, the always-active organ, secures, in the midst of sounds and tones, certain silhouettes, which together with the advancing music can congeal into clear shapes.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 511: "To concur with Carl Dahlhaus, Joseph Joachim was perceived not only as the preserver of the aesthetic subject of the work, but rather in it the composer appeared much more biographically present, not only to a broad public, but also to a musician like Johannes Brahms." ("Joseph Joachim wurde, um mit Carl Dahlhaus zu sprechen, nicht nur als Statthalter des ästhetischen Subjekts des Werkes wahrgenommen sondern in ihm schien vielmehr der Komponist auch biographisch present, nicht nur einem breiten Publikum, sondern auch einem Musiker wie Johannes Brahms.") For Dahlhaus's point, see Borchard, 511, fn. 45, Dahlhaus, "Der Dirigent als Statthalter," *Melos/Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 2 (1976): 30.

<sup>41</sup> "Was überhaupt die schwierige Frage, wieweit die Instrumentalmusik in Darstellung von Gedanken und Begebenheiten gehen dürfe, anlangt, so sehen hier viele zu ängstlich. Man irrt sich gewiß, wenn man glaubt, die Komponisten legten sich Feder und Papier in der elenden Absicht zurecht, dies oder jenes auszudrücken, zu schildern, zu malen. Doch schlage man zufällige Einflüsse und Eindrücke von außen nicht zu gering an. Unbewußt neben der musikalischen Phantasie wirkt oft eine Idee fort, neben dem Ohre das Auge, und dieses, das immer tätige Organ, hält dann mitten unter den Klängen und Tönen gewisse Umrisse fest, die sich mit der vorrückenden Musik zu deutlichen Gestalten verdichten und ausbilden können." Constantin Floros, "Literarische Ideen in der Musik des 19. Jahrhundert," in *Hamburger Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* 2 (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1977), 44. He cites Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, 2 vols., ed. Gerd Nauhaus (1854; reprint, Wiesbaden, 1985), I:84.

In a similar vein, Schumann expressed that his Third Symphony contained “perhaps here and there a reflection of a piece of life.”<sup>42</sup> The idea that music can capture aspects of a composer’s life may meet some resistance, given the great swing in the nineteenth century toward, but since the Second World War *against* this type of *Geschichtsschreibung*. But an approach like “Psychological music” cannot do without it. When we turn to the 1850s, furthermore, we see not only in Joachim’s, but also in Schumann’s writings evidence that for these composers such a strict separation between life and work did not exist. But the parallels we suggest are never meant 1:1 but rather in a manner as described by Schumann, whose writings divulge that for him, at least, a composer’s fantasy did not exist in a vacuum.

Besides the invaluable insight gained from Joachim’s archival correspondence – in addition to the unpublished letters in Frankfurt I have had access to numerous other letters through the archive in Hamburg (Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky), as well as to the many letters between Joachim and his brother Heinrich, which are kept in the archive of the Brahms Institute, Lübeck.

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<sup>42</sup> “... vielleicht hier und da ein Stück Leben widerspiegelt.” Floros, 43, cites Arthur Niggli “[Erläuterungen der ] III. Symphonie,” in *Rob[ert] Schumann’s Symphonien*, Schlesingersche Musikbibliothek, Meisterführer, vol. 13 (Berlin, without date), 49.

Furthermore, analyzing Joachim's manuscripts to study his compositional process has been an important part of my methodology. These sources provide insights into the chronology of different works, and the composer's hand-written inscriptions as well as notational symbols provide important evidence for Chapters 1, 3, and 6, respectively. My methodology has also relied on interpreting literary works in connection to Joachim's music because, as will be evident, Joachim's music was influenced directly or indirectly by certain literary figures in his circle, above all by Gisela von Arnim, but also by Bettine von Arnim, Achim von Arnim, and Herman Grimm. Chapters 4 and 5 center on a play by Gisela, Chapter 6 discusses a song and text from Bettine and Achim von Arnim, respectively, and Chapter 3 includes Herman Grimm's play *Demetrius* as its starting point. Relating Joachim's music to literary ideas and considering how he responded musically to these ideas allows us to see him in a new light – especially when we remember that he has been viewed as “not intellectual.”<sup>43</sup> Showing that he was indeed willing to accept extramusical ideas as inspiration and incorporate them in his music also adds valuable evidence supporting the main argument, that “psychological music,” in many ways, was more open to the idea of representation in music than especially early nineteenth-century sources made us believe.

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<sup>43</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 38.

If Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 anchor Joachim firmly in Gisela's literary circle, we should also note the specifically *philosophical* and *historical* literary influences Joachim seems to have absorbed. Albeit not related to Gisela, these influences affected an incredibly active intellectual mind, and suggest that Joachim was highly aware of the literature of his day. While Borchard described Joachim, in some respects, as "kein intellektueller Künstler,"<sup>44</sup> other scholars have acknowledged that "like Mendelssohn, Joachim was a great lover of words [...] [and among his friends were] the Arnims, Grimms, Tennyson, Browning, Thackeray, Dickens, and Eliot [he also visited Mörike]." <sup>45</sup> But again, what these interests mean for his compositions and their multi-leveled allusions represents a topic still not exhausted in the literature.

Chapter 1 situates the origins of Joachim's "psychological music" in the abstract, metaphysical discourse at the University of Göttingen, where he matriculated in 1853. As a musical case in point, the little-known violin piece *Abendglocken* presents an opportunity to examine in detail an early example of Joachim's psychological music.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Eshbach, "Joachim's Youth – Joachim's Jewishness," 573.

<sup>46</sup> Investigating Joachim's university experience in Göttingen has been facilitated through access to his matriculation card and a database containing all semester course listings between 1780 and 1948.

Chapter 2 then continues with the contemporaneous Overture to *Hamlet* (1852-1853). In this case, Joachim's connection to Georg Gottfried Gervinus, with whom he corresponded, may have inspired the overture, while Gervinus's writings on Shakespeare also reflected the cultural and revolutionary political climate of the time. This chapter perhaps best represents the insights to be gained from an interdisciplinary investigation of Joachim's music in light of contemporary politics and history, and the deep sense of resignation that materialized in German realms in the years after 1848.

Another overture is the subject of Chapter 3, which turns to Joachim's *Demetrius* and its literary sources in the plays of Schiller and Herman Grimm. Here Joachim's letters shed light on the transfer of literary elements from *Demetrius* into his overture, and suggest that Joachim was identifying psychologically with the title character of *Demetrius*. For Joachim composing the overture represented an inner storm or agitation, which he compared to having been "a ghost [...] in an Aeolian harp."<sup>47</sup> The music of the *Demetrius* Overture best sheds light on Joachim's attraction to, and experimentation with, progressive aesthetic features of the day.

Chapter 4 focuses on an unusual collaboration between Joachim and Gisela that took as its basis the classical myth of "Cupid and Psyche." Here we may understand

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<sup>47</sup> Johannes Joachim and Andreas Moser, eds, *Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Bard, 1911-1913), hereinafter *Joachim Briefe*, I:38, letter to Bargiel of February 4, 1853.



Joachim's idiosyncratic compositional approach – intensely centered around Gisela – as a late example of an earlier tradition involving literary role-play. Once again, the result—Joachim's draft of music for a pantomime scene – offers a cogent example of psychological music. Picking up the threads of Chapter 4, Chapter 5 adds to the discussion Joachim's music. Gisela's letters enable us to reconstruct how she envisioned her stage work, and in turn, how Joachim responded musically to the imagination of one he identified as his "Gis-Seele" (Psyche, or soul).

Chapter 6, lastly, offers an epilogue-like perspective on how Gisela continued to be involved in Joachim's life and music well after the end of their romantic relationship in the 1850s. Here the work in question is Joachim's Violin Concerto in G major, begun in 1854 (though published, after her death, only in 1889). While Joachim's psychological music shares much with two romantic compositional approaches – demonstrated through comparisons to Schumann and Bettine von Arnim – in the end, Joachim's term has to be situated in some part as hovering between romanticism and the nascent realism of the later nineteenth century. The manner in which Joachim's relationship with Gisela von Arnim in the 1850s served to inspire him—expressed in myriad ways within and outside his music – suggests that an idiosyncratic *symbiosis* took place during his early career as a composer, which was severely tested and ultimately invalidated after their separation at the end of the 1850s.

# 1. Of “Psychological Music,” Ciphers, and Daguerreotypes: Joseph Joachim’s *Abendglocken* Op. 5 No. 2 (1853)

“The young Joachim’s experience was extraordinarily rich, and he had enough of his own efforts at what I have heard him call ‘psychological’ music.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1937 Sir Donald Francis Tovey, a good friend of the violinist and composer Joseph Joachim (1831-1907), used the occasion of discussing Joachim’s *Hungarian Violin Concerto* (1857) to introduce a mysterious term that, at least until recently, has perplexed scholars of nineteenth-century music. Here Tovey disclosed that Joachim described his Weimar works from the early 1850s as exemplifying *Psychologische Musik*, or “psychological music,” thereby revealing a distinctive, autobiographical approach to composition. While Tovey’s comment thus far has remained the only discussed source that describes Joachim’s music as explicitly psychological,<sup>2</sup> we can now add to it Joachim’s own use of the term in a little-known letter:

Beethoven often carried a theme inside him for weeks before it completely expressed his mood – but one also notices that in how his ideas developed! Such a theme then returns in the most wonderful shapes – but it is not arbitrariness! One actually feels that it [the theme] had experienced everything with the

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<sup>1</sup> Donald F. Tovey, “Joseph Joachim: Hungarian Violin Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 11,” in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 151.

<sup>2</sup> Borchard takes Tovey’s lead in her book *Stimme und Geige* and in her article “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik,” 209.

master, that it had been his constant friend and companion. Hence the sympathetic effect – I would like to be able to write a psychology of tones!<sup>3</sup>

While Tovey “heard” Joachim speak of “psychological” music around 1900,<sup>4</sup> this letter confirms that it was already on Joachim’s mind in October 1853. But what did “psychological music” or “psychology of tones” mean at a time when psychology was not yet a separate science but rather appeared in largely non-empirical discussions of philosophy, anthropology, and metaphysics, among other disciplines, and, furthermore, when psychology as “the science of the mind” (“die Wissenschaft von der Seele”) was aimed at investigating “an underlying metaphysical mind-substance,” as Wilhelm Wundt, the “father of psychology,” reminisced in 1896 about the state of early psychology?<sup>5</sup> And how are we to interpret Joachim’s implied desideratum that music

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<sup>3</sup> “Beethoven, der trug oft wochenlang ein Thema in sich, bevor es ihm ganz Ausdruck seiner Stimmung geworden war: das merkt man aber auch dann bei der Durchführung seiner Gedanken! So ein Thema kommt dann in den wunderbarsten Versetzungen wieder – aber es ist nicht Willkür! Man fühlt wirklich, dass es [das Thema] mit dem Meister all das erlebt hatte, daß es sein steter Freund und Begleiter gewesen war. Daher die Sympathische Wirkung – ich möchte eine Psychologie der Töne schreiben können!” *Joachim Briefe*, I:95, letter from Joachim to Herman Grimm of October 1853 [my translation, as all English quotations in this dissertation, unless specified otherwise].

<sup>4</sup> Joachim’s letters first mention Tovey in 1901. See *Joachim Briefe*, III:499.

<sup>5</sup> The word psychology (from Gr. psyche, “soul, life, breath”) goes back to Aristotle. In 1896, Wundt gave two historical definitions of psychology as it had been understood before 1879, when under his influence it became an empirical discipline. First, as the “science of the soul,” psychology considered psychic processes as “phenomena, from which could be drawn the essence of a metaphysical soul substance that lay at their foundation.” According to the other definition, psychology was the “science of inner experience”; here, psychic events belonged to a

should be a “complete expression of a mood” – by extension, Joachim’s own mood in relation to his own music? And lastly, when he refers to being “able to write” such music, he seems to hint at his own desire to achieve a “psychology of tones.” But did Joachim, in fact, leave to posterity music that fits this description?

Joachim’s autobiographical approach to composition, beholden neither to Liszt’s so-called “Neudeutsche Schule” nor to Hanslick’s formalist principles, appears to be directly related to his intensely romantic relationship with Gisela von Arnim (1827-1889), daughter of Bettina von Arnim, as documented by their correspondence.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, we can read between Joachim’s lines to construe how his “psychological” approach to composition offered an outlet for his “mood” by soothing his agitated feelings for Gisela, effectively confirming that, for Joachim, *Stimmung* and composition

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particular type of experience that involved self-reflection, or, in contrast to external sensory perception, the “inner sense.” Wilhelm Wundt, *Grundriss der Psychologie*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Leipzig, 1896; Altenmünster: Jazzybee, 2012), 7. In the 1850s a significant shift occurred from understanding *psyche* as “soul,” influenced primarily by anthropology, philosophy and literature, toward emphasizing the “materialistic,” physiological, neurological, and anatomic aspects, thus connecting the mind with “the material realm.” See Rudolph Wagner, *Physiologische Briefe 1851-1852* (Göttingen: Klatt, 1997), cited in Richard Pohl, *Akustische Briefe für Musiker und Musikfreunde. Eine populäre Darstellung der Musik als Naturwissenschaft in Beziehung zur Tonkunst* (Leipzig: Bruno Hinze, 1853), 5-6.

<sup>6</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*; also, the unpublished letters of Gisela von Arnim to Joseph Joachim are kept at the Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt. See, for a recent study about the intimate letters between Joachim and Gisela von Arnim, Eshbach’s article “Verehrter Freund! Liebes Kind! Liebster Jo! Mein einzig Licht. – Intimate Letters in Brahms’s *Freundeskreis*,” 178-193.

were inextricably linked, just as his comments about Beethoven suggest. Joachim further touched on this issue in a letter of December 1853: "I was senseless, insanely irritated by my inner disquiet, from which I found relief not in thoughts, but in the most terrible dissonances that I strung together in a fantasy,"<sup>7</sup> as if only composing could loosen the firm grip of his emotions. As recent research on Joachim's "cultivated public identity" has investigated with the help of photographic evidence,<sup>8</sup> his goal as a public figure was to perform "unmediated" music as a "natural spontaneous utterance of his inmost feelings, as well as [to offer] a faithful reproduction of the thoughts of whatever master he may [have been] interpreting."<sup>9</sup> And speaking as a composer, he advised his friend Brahms that "particularly composers of genius in this time must avoid everything conspicuously superficial."<sup>10</sup> But while a recent study has viewed this comment as one reason why Joachim refrained from offering explicit representational signifiers in his

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<sup>7</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Leistra-Jones, "Virtue and Virtuosity: Brahms, the Concerto, and the Politics of Performance in the Late-Nineteenth Century," 81-82, 125, 146.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 133. Leistra-Jones cites Fuller-Maitland, *Joseph Joachim*, 8.

<sup>10</sup> "Es scheint mir, daß alles äußerlich Auffallende gerade von genialen Naturen jetzt vermieden werden müsse." Moser, ed., *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, I: 47, letter of June 27, 1854.

works, unlike some composers of the New German school,<sup>11</sup> as we shall see, in his case turning inward did not rule out extramusical representation in his compositions.

If as a performer and Brahms's close collaborator, Joachim advocated the "canonization of the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms,"<sup>12</sup> a process seemingly less sympathetic to program music than to the so-called "absolutist" position of Brahms, as a composer Joachim does not display such an aesthetic stance. Joachim's own remarks betray an underlying attitude that composition should "*detect and save* [the emotions<sup>13</sup>],"

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<sup>11</sup> Borchard, "Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachim's Konzept einer psychologischen Musik," 207.

<sup>12</sup> Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, "Musikalische Interpretation und antisemitisches Rezeptionsparadox: Joseph Joachim – Richard Wagner – Hans von Bülow," in *Musikwelten – Lebenswelten: Jüdische Identitätssuche in der deutschen Musikkultur*, ed. Beatrix Borchard and Heidy Zimmermann (Wien: Böhlau, 2009), 181.

<sup>13</sup> Lydia Goehr has pointed out to me that after the founding of empirical psychology, there was a shift in what was understood by emotion. Joachim and his contemporaries presumably understood emotion in a strictly phenomenological sense. In contemporary psychology phenomenological aspects are thought of as crucial aspects but not the only aspects of emotion. Joachim uses the terms "Stimmung" and "Empfindung" to describe his moods. Although "Empfindung" has also been used as perceiving tones or colors (Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [1854; reprint, Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1865], 4: "Empfindung ist das Wahrnehmen einer bestimmten Sinnesqualität: eines Tons, einer Farbe, Gefühl das Bewußtwerden einer Förderung oder Hemmung unseres Seelenzustandes, also eines Wohlseins oder Missbehagens"), Joachim makes clear that for him "Empfindung" has more to do with what Hanslick defines as "Gefühl": "Du kamst, und führtest mich [...] wieder dem warmen Hauch der Empfindung zu – was sag ich Empfindung – Begeisterung! Ach auch das ist nur ein Wort – und nicht Leben, warmaufblühendes, nie vergehendes, wie ich es in mir fühle, wie ich damit Dir angehöre, Du magst mein werden oder nicht – Du einzig Liebe auf Erden," Joachim, *Joachim's Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 2, letter of November 27, 1853.

implying that a *detailed* perception and faithful *recording* of the emotions should determine his composition.

The music Joachim created during the 1850s indeed reflects the emotional turmoil of his life and separates his work considerably from that of Liszt and Robert Schumann, with whom Joachim's early compositions are frequently linked. As will be argued, Joachim's *Psychologische Musik* breaks free from these influences, especially Schumann's – a point not yet fully accounted for in the Joachim literature. While recent work by Beatrix Borchard and Robert Eshbach<sup>14</sup> discusses Joachim's psychological style and reasons for its "failure,"<sup>15</sup> neither has yet put forward an analytical case study of Joachim's music that focuses in depth on his *Psychologische Musik*, which, if it failed, nevertheless proved exceptional by offering a unique perspective on the early 1850s.

Nowhere do we find a more compelling example of Joachim's early compositional approach than in the remarkable, yet relatively little-known, piece for violin and piano entitled *Abendglocken* (*Evening Bells*), composed in the fall of 1853 and released in 1855 as Joachim's Op. 5 No. 2.<sup>16</sup> Here, in Joachim's starkly expressive musical

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<sup>14</sup> Eshbach, "Der Geigerkönig: Joseph Joachim as Performer," 205 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Borchard (2002).

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Joachim, *Drei Stücke für Violine und Klavier Op. 5: Lindenrauschen, Abendglocken, and Ballade*, dedicated to Gisela von Arnim (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1855); Joachim's autograph is preserved in the Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Brahms Nachlass, MS #BRA:AC25.

style, we find invaluable clues for explicating his psychological music. In brief, we shall offer three approaches to this piece, first by considering the possible origins of *Psychologische Musik* and its implications for Joachim's music of the 1850s, then by interpreting *Abendglocken* as an essay in musical ciphers departing notably from Schumann, and lastly by suggesting an analogy between *Abendglocken* and the new technology of early photography (including the daguerreotype), which aimed to detect and preserve impressions as they really were. Following the caesura of the 1848 Revolution an aesthetic emerged in art, literature, and music that highlighted attention to detail, as evident in the increasingly accessible daguerreotypes. The analogy of Joachim's *Abendglocken* to the daguerreotype allows a tool for understanding the music's specific visual features and heavy use of ciphers, and at the same time shares an intrinsic feature with *Psychologische Musik*: the aim of capturing and materializing impressions.

### **1.1 Reconstructing Joachim's Psychological Music**

During the summer of 1853 the twenty-two year-old composer was a student at the University of Göttingen, matriculating on June 14.<sup>17</sup> He remained in the city until

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<sup>17</sup> Already on June 8, 1853, Joachim reports to his brother Heinrich: "Hereby I report to you, that I have settled, after a few days, in Göttingen [where I intend to stay] for months or more. It has been my wish for a long time to attend a University." ("... damit melde ich dir, dass ich hier in Göttingen seit einigen Tagen für Monate oder mehr einquartiert bin. Es war ein lange gehegter



September, attending classes of several eminent academics, among them the philosopher Heinrich Ritter (1791-1869).<sup>18</sup> Ritter introduced Joachim to psychology, then just emerging from the discipline of philosophy. What Joachim learned in Göttingen was of paramount importance to him, as he recalled in 1901, when at age seventy he received an honorary doctorate from this very university: "On my seventieth birthday nothing delighted me as much as the honor bestowed on me by the [Georgia Augusta] University of Göttingen. The honorable band that united me from then on with Georgia Augusta holds a special meaning for me – that during my youth [in 1853] my world views were set for life at the feet of her members, Professors [Georg<sup>19</sup>] Waitz and Ritter."<sup>20</sup> Specifically, Ritter's influence on Joachim's views about philosophy and

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Wunsch von mir auf eine Universität zu ziehen.") Letter Ms. 1991.2.53.6, Brahms Institute Lübeck.

<sup>18</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 137.

<sup>19</sup> Contrary to what recently has been assumed by Hugh Macdonald in *Music in 1853: The Biography of a Year* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), 71, Joachim did not study with Theodor Waitz, professor of philosophy at Marburg University, but rather with the historian Georg Waitz and the philosopher Heinrich Ritter. See the *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen* (1780-1948, Universität Göttingen), Göttinger Digitalisierungszentrum, <http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/dms/loader/toc/?PPN=PPN654655340> (accessed January 16, 2014).

<sup>20</sup> "Zu meinem siebzigsten Geburtstag hat mich nichts so sehr beglückt, nichts so gehoben, als die Ehrung, welche mir die Göttinger Universität zu Theil werden ließ. Das ehrende Band, das mich von nun an mit der Georgia Augusta vereint, hat den besonderen Sinn für mich, daß ich in meiner Jugend zu Füßen ihrer Angehörigen, Professor Waitz und Ritter, in meinen

psychology may have provided an important impetus for the latter's psychological music.

Joachim's letters following his stay at Göttingen readily reveal new nuances in his thinking. The two months he spent at this emerging center of psychology – no less than the philosopher/psychologist Johann Friedrich Herbart had taught philosophy there (or “psychic anthropology or psychology” and metaphysics, among other philosophical disciplines)<sup>21</sup> – seem to have left a significant mark on him, as reflected in his choice of unusual philosophical terminology, not to say technical metaphysical language, from the fall of 1853 and onwards. Although Joachim had enrolled in philosophy – “Logik und Metaphysik”<sup>22</sup> – the ideas he likely encountered were what we would today think of as interdisciplinary and therefore relevant from a psychological point of view, that is, as then understood by philosophers, given that psychology was

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Anschauungen fürs Leben gefestigt worden bin.” *Joachim Briefe*, III:500-501, letter to Woldemar Voigt of July 10, 1901.

<sup>21</sup> See fn. 23.

<sup>22</sup> Besides the class with Ritter he signed up for lectures with Carl Oesterley (art history) and Georg Waitz (German history).

still loosely defined and just beginning to become an empirical, independent discipline.<sup>23</sup>

“Psychology” was also referred to as “psychische Anthropologie,” or “psychische Anthropologie oder Psychologie” up to 1835.<sup>24</sup> Just as anthropological issues were discussed in “psychology,” so were questions relevant to psychology discussed in philosophical subdisciplines, such as whether inner impressions are *arbitrary* or determined by some inner or outer force. The idea of “Willkür”<sup>25</sup> as denoting, in one of

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<sup>23</sup> Heinrich Ritter, as well as most professors in this department (including Herbart until 1841), not only published on philosophy, psychology, metaphysics and logic but also taught the whole range of courses alternating each semester. See the *Verzeichnis der Vorlesungen* (1780-1948, Universität Göttingen), Göttinger Digitalisierungszentrum, <http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/dms/loader/toc/?PPN=PPN654655340> (accessed January 16, 2014). Furthermore, the relationship between metaphysics and psychology was described succinctly by Herbart, who, based on the ancient thinkers, proposed that: “[Psychology] ist der erste unter den drei Theilen der angewandten Metaphysik” (Johann Friedrich Herbart. *Johann Friedrich Herbart's sämtliche Werke. Fünfter Band, Schriften zur Psychologie*, ed. G. Hartenstein [reprint, Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1850], xi). And lastly, clarifying the title of his book, Herbart's foreword states: “Vielleicht ist die Bemerkung nicht ganz überflüssig, dass die Bezeichnung *Psychologie, gegründet auf Metaphysik, Erfahrung und Mathematik* geeignet ist Missverständnisse zu erregen. Ge gründet ist die Psychologie lediglich auf Erfahrung und Metaphysik.” Although Herbart presumably meant that mathematics was the “missverständliche” part of his book's title – an early attempt, which aimed to provide a scientific framework by explaining psychological processes with the help of mathematic formulas – for our purpose it is important that “psychology” was, nevertheless “only” “based” on metaphysics. Ibid., xi.

<sup>24</sup> These “psychology” courses discussed anthropology from a post-Kantian point of view, including the classification of human emotions, desires, feelings and affects, and also theories and classifications about the psychological differences between men and women and between cultures, races and genders. See, for example, Immanuel Kant's *Anthropologie aus Pragmatischer Hinsicht* (1798) (*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*), which was based on his lectures on anthropology delivered at Königsberg for twenty-five years preceding its publication.

<sup>25</sup> According to the *Allgemeine Encyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (1849), “The word *Willkür* [arbitrariness], which denotes etymologically the choice of the will (from *küren*, to choose)

its philosophical senses, *freedom* of the rational human was a central idea for the philosophical concepts of determinism and fatalism (a strong type of determinism) in the post-Kantian tradition and a key question of metaphysics, and hence part of what Joachim likely encountered in his philosophical studies at Göttingen.

One question Ritter most likely discussed and Joachim hence likely encountered was whether *acting* “freely” as opposed to “arbitrarily” meant being determined by certain inner necessities (broadly speaking, essential human properties as understood in an Aristotelian sense). As it turns out, Joachim’s letters expressed some clear ideas about “arbitrariness” and “fatalism,” arguably derived from Ritter’s philosophical position about “freedom” published in his extensive book entitled *System der Logik und der Metaphysik* (1856). The foreword clarifies that Ritter worked on his book for more than forty years. Quite plausibly, he based his 1853 class attended by Joachim on parts of the book manuscript.<sup>26</sup>

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is more often also used in philosophical parlance as synonymous with freedom, in that the self-conscious or rational human *Willkür* is opposed to the blind instinct of beasts. By contrast, in common usage *Willkür* denotes the assertion of one’s will purely according to one’s wish or pleasure, mood or caprice.” Karl Hermann Scheidler, “Freiheit,” 16.

<sup>26</sup> Ritter also published *Psychologische Abhandlung* (*Psychological Essay*) (Kiel: Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1840).

Ritter distinguishes between two types of “necessity,”<sup>27</sup> basing his argument on an Aristotelian/Stoic tradition, which maintained that inner necessity applies to us because without certain necessary characteristics we would not be human, that is, we would not be what we are. Hence inner necessity relates to our inner essential nature. The other, outer, necessity concerns things caused externally, which do not determine us from within but that depend on coincidences and accidental events and causes.<sup>28</sup> Even if the events arising from outer necessity change, we remain human. Because we as humans possess a “rational essence,” Ritter argues, we are subject to inner necessity.<sup>29</sup> Ritter furthermore distinguished *being* from *doing* and argued that a free deed is one that accords with our inner nature: with our reason and morality.<sup>30</sup> But a free deed, for Ritter, does not itself have inner necessity because it involves “free will and is a free act.”<sup>31</sup> Here Ritter argued against the “naturalists,” who contended that the “law,” which was part of Ritter’s definition of “freedom” (to act in accordance with morality), is equivalent to

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<sup>27</sup> Heinrich Ritter, *System der Logik und der Metaphysik*, vol. 2 (Göttingen: Dieterich’sche Buchhandlung, 1856), 99.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 99-104.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>31</sup> “[Involviert einen] freie[n] Entschluss [und ist ein] freier Act.” Ibid., 104.

necessity: "What complies with the law seems to them a necessity, and where necessity begins freedom ends," or so the naturalists believed.<sup>32</sup>

Presumably the "law" Ritter was talking about was what Kant had earlier called the "moral law," a law, according to Kant, that arose within us as an inner necessity or part of our essential being, not as an outer necessity imposed on us from some external source. If what we do is brought about by an outer necessity, there is a "contingency" or "randomness" at play, which is very different from "freedom," as Ritter adamantly stressed.<sup>33</sup> In other words, if we do things incompatible with the laws of our inner humanity and reason, we act with lawlessness; if not ethical, our actions are not free. In short: for Ritter freedom and the free act were subject to special restrictions, arising from certain "inner necessities." If one has a choice, it is only "among deeds, in which [man] . . . can manifest his character, type and species, and develop his innate or acquired abilities."<sup>34</sup> Pursuing one's humanity and morality hence provided the greatest freedom

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<sup>32</sup> "Was dem Gesetze sich fügt, das scheint ihnen nothwendig zu sein, und wo die Nothwendigkeit anfängt, die Freiheit aufzuhören." Ibid., 102.

<sup>33</sup> "Zufälligkeit" should not be confused with "freedom" because "since randomness originates only from external circumstances, freedom arises from the thing itself." ("...da dieses [Zufälligkeit] nur aus äußern Verhältnissen, jenes [Freiheit] aus dem Dinge selbst hervorgehn soll.") Ibid., 103.

<sup>34</sup> "So ist es seine Wahl unter den Thaten, in welchen [der Mensch] [...] seinen Charakter, seine Art und Gattung bethätigen und sein ihm angeborenes oder angeschaffenes Vermögen entwickeln kann. Weiter geht seine Freiheit nicht; sie würde Gesetzlosigkeit sein." Ibid., 103.

because humans are determined by an inner necessity. Thus Joachim would have heard about two radically different philosophical definitions of freedom in these lectures: freedom as not being bound by laws and necessities (“naturalism”) and freedom as an expression of inner necessities and an accompanying moral law (Ritter’s favored idealist definition).

Ritter also, however, mentioned one last kind of “necessity,” an inner necessity that results from earlier deeds influencing/determining later deeds in a way that could be understood as “inner necessity,” although he made sure to distance himself from this type, which he called “determinism”: “If one maintains that free deeds were synonymous with inner necessity, proceeding from this notion one wants to say that earlier deeds precipitate later deeds from necessity.”<sup>35</sup> Ritter further argued that “we must maintain the right of every deed to signify something for itself, to determine something about its development and life,”<sup>36</sup> to determine reality “from the ability of the

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<sup>35</sup> “Wenn man nun meint die Freiheit der Thaten wäre innere Nothwendigkeit, so will man damit sagen, von dieser Auffassungsweise ausgehend, das Verhältniß der frühern Thaten zu den spätern führe diese mit Nothwendigkeit herbei.” Ibid., 105.

<sup>36</sup> “Einer jeden That müssen wir das Recht behaupten für sich etwas zu bedeuten, etwas zu bestimmen über die Entwicklung und das Leben.” Ibid., 105. “Aus dem Vermögen des Dinges [oder Subjektes] heraus.” Ibid., 105-106.

thing [or subject]" and not be determined by a "chain of earlier deeds."<sup>37</sup> Ritter's discussion of different kinds of necessity is, finally, intimately related to the concept of fatalism, a significant concept for Joachim's psychological music. "Fatalism," for Ritter, meant that outer "necessity" brings about courses of events. Fatalism might appear to be the same as determinism. But unlike determinism, fatalism suggests that *everything* is caused by an outer force, including "drives" and "abilities," which according to determinism are part of the "inner nature of things."<sup>38</sup> This means that fatalistic deeds accord with Ritter's understanding of neither freedom nor free will. Fatalism denies both.<sup>39</sup>

Turning now to Joachim, can these metaphysical concepts, challenging though they might be, help us enlighten the composer's *modus operandi*? Could fatalism have anything to do with psychological music, which for us connotes not so much metaphysics as the realm of the emotions? As we shall now see, the manner in which Joachim's emotions took hold of him seems to have led him to adopt terminology derived from Ritter's metaphysics class in order to describe his own inner experience.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>38</sup> "Innere Natur der Dinge." Ibid., 134-135.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 101.



In 1856 Joachim reflected back on his early overtures and other works and made this telling observation: “[In everything] I have thus far composed, I have surrendered to *a certain fatalism of emotion* to such a degree that I considered it unjust to give my mind any task other than to detect and to recognize; its task was to gather what had been bred in the warmth of our emotions and save it from the abyss.”<sup>40</sup> We have already noted that Joachim found in his emotions a certain truth worth “preserving.” But Joachim’s perception of his emotions taking hold of him with “*a certain fatalism [...] to such a degree*” that he could only surrender to them is even more striking. Here, then, we seem to have a clear case of Joachim’s thinking about his composing in terms of the concepts he had learned about in Ritter’s philosophy course.

In a recent entry on fatalism Hugh Rice notes that “fatalism” is “commonly used to refer to an attitude of resignation in the face of some future event or events, which are thought to be inevitable”; but, more technically, “philosophers usually use the word to refer to the view that we are powerless to do anything other than what we actually do,”<sup>41</sup> a definition not unlike Ritter’s, the only difference being that Ritter’s view implied

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<sup>40</sup> “[...] bei allem was ich bis jetzt schuf, gab ich mich einem gewissen Fatalismus der Empfindung bis zu dem Grade hin, dass ich es für ein Unrecht hielt, dem Geist ein ander Amt als das des Aufsuchens und Erkennens dabei zu gönnen; er sollte nur was aus der Wärme unserer Empfindung gebrütet sich regte vor dem Untergang retten.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 97, letter of April 23, 1856.

that the inner world could also be shaped by outer events. A dictionary from Joachim's time describes fatalism as follows: "With respect to fatalism, it assumes that the cause of everything that happens in the world is owing only to blind fate,"<sup>42</sup> again stressing the powerlessness with which the subject is swept over by outer circumstances or, in Joachim's case, by emotions. Joachim's surrendering to fatalism could imply that up to 1856, at least, he had let his emotions determine the course of his compositions, viewing his emotions as something he was powerless to resist – all this in order to let the composition turn out the way it *had to turn out*. In some instances Joachim's fatalistic yielding to his emotions resembled succumbing to "tyranny":

The last fourteen days I have constantly worked and revised; that is my misfortune, that until now (even if I first have a draft of the whole in my head) instead of vigorously writing it down, I often allow myself to be tormented by a single passage, until I properly grasp it in every detail according to my inner feeling – a pitch often persecutes me to the point of pain, and since such a creature doesn't let itself be cast out of the head, like people out the door, so I can do nothing else than allow myself to be tyrannized by it.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See Hugh Rice, "Fatalism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/fatalism/>.

<sup>42</sup> K. H. Scheidler, "Freiheit," *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, ed. J. G. Gruber (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1849), 22.

<sup>43</sup> "In den letzten 14 Tagen habe ich unausgesetzt [...] gearbeitet und umgearbeitet: das ist mein Unglück, dass ich bis jetzt (wenn ich erst den Entwurf des Ganzen im Kopf habe) statt rüstig aufzuschreiben, mich oft von einer einzelnen Stelle quälen lasse, bis ich sie meinem inneren Empfinden im kleinsten gerecht sehe – ein Ton verfolgt mich oft bis zur Pein immer wieder, und

Continuing this line of argument, Joachim's other letters admonish that composition should not be governed by "arbitrariness." One example is his passing comment cited above (fn. 3) about Beethoven and the psychology of tones: "Such a theme then returns in the most wonderful shapes – but it is not "Willkür" [arbitrariness?]. One actually feels that it had experienced everything with the master, that it had been his constant friend and companion. Hence the sympathetic effect – I would like to be able to write a psychology of tones!" Another letter about Beethoven and "Willkür" reads: "Music is the purest expression of feeling, only 'Willkürliches' [the arbitrary?], the contingent, and the unnatural are foreign to it. Beethoven, in this matter, is the everlasting model; he was more than anyone else a deep connoisseur of the human soul."<sup>44</sup>

How did Joachim understand "Willkür"? Most likely he understood "Willkür" in its ordinary sense as "capriciousness." But if Joachim was using the aforementioned philosophical sense, signifying a synonym of "freedom," he would have had in mind here one of the different understandings of freedom discussed above – the "lawless" freedom of the so-called "naturalists." At any rate, he appears to have believed that in a

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da sich so ein Wesen nicht zum Kopf hinaus werfen lässt, wie Menschen zur Thür, so kann ich nichts anderes tun, als mich von ihm tyrannisieren zu lassen." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 24, letter of February 14, 1854.

<sup>44</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:47, letter to Woldemar Bargiel, April 7, 1853.

composition themes should precipitate later thematic treatments and that thematic variety is desirable only if justified so that there is no wholly free and “lawless” choice, but instead a sense of determination or necessity at work.<sup>45</sup> Hence Joachim’s observation of Beethoven’s “wonderful redeployments” of a theme, perceived as necessary consequences of how Beethoven had used the theme before. Going beyond musical implications, “Willkür” in both Beethoven-related remarks above appears diametrically opposed to the “psychological” or to “the connoisseur of the human soul.” The essential principle of psychological music, presumably, rested on being “the complete expression” of the inner life – hence Joachim’s desire to compose by “detecting and saving emotions from the abyss” – and on the absence of “Willkür” interpreted as “lawless” freedom or capriciousness.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> There seem to be different possibilities of how Joachim could have understood “Willkür.” In addition to the line of thought this chapter suggests, he could have simply adhered to an aesthetic of the romantic genius reminiscent of Schumann’s perception of his own creative process. In Schumann’s letters we read of his *discovering* that, at the end of his *Davidsbündler Tänze* Op. 6, the clock strikes twelve times; in other words, Schumann’s discovery in his own composition points to a difference between the conscious act of composing and the type of composing, which is not intended consciously but a result of inspiration from some creative source. See one of the definitions of “unwillkürlich” in *Duden*, German dictionary, as “happening completely by itself, without one’s desire, for example like an involuntary reaction, such as having an impulse to laugh,” <http://www.duden.de/node/651463/revisions/1229438/view> (accessed April 4, 2014).

<sup>46</sup> Passages about the need to listen to his “Stimmung” frequently occur in his letters. One month after finishing *Abendglocken* he wrote to Gisela that composers, like poets, had to seek and express the “inner tone of their soul” (“inneren Ton seiner Seele”). See Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 8, letter of December 3-4, 1853. Furthermore, Joachim revealed that when capturing

In 1854, Joachim's famous rejection of Liszt's music also centered on "arbitrariness": "Liszt could be a gratifying enough man in spirit and intellect, and yet he requires the most complicated machinations to conceal himself [...]. There is in all his actions an arbitrariness [...]. That pains me [...] because it is sad standing pitifully before those that one would have otherwise scarcely dared to judge."<sup>47</sup> Lastly, there is some anecdotal evidence from Joachim's first biographer, Andreas Moser, which is relevant here. And this is an instance where Joachim was clearly using the sense of freedom favored by Ritter, where it was not something "lawless," but rather a product of some inner necessity or law. Moser writes, nearly recalling Ritter verbatim, that "sentences

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his feelings became difficult, for whatever reason, his "Stimmung was disturbed," as was his composition, evident from a letter of December 1853: "Yesterday I began an overture, and I will try to finish it soon. If one's mood were not always disturbed by a thousand things." ("Gestern habe ich eine Ouvertüre angefangen, und ich will suchen sie rasch zu beenden. Wenn man nur nicht immer durch tausend Dinge in seiner Stimmung gestört würde.") See the same letter, 5-6. And, similarly, Joachim reported, after having read Hölderlin's *Hyperion* in 1854, "that the themes of the symphony sprang up from the mood that arose in me from [reading]." ("[Aus] der Stimmung, die daraus in mir entstanden, sind die Themen der Sinfonie entsprungen.") See the same volume, 29, letter of April 1854.

<sup>47</sup> "Liszt könnte seiner herrlichen Gemüths- und Geistes-Anlagen nach, ein beglückender Mensch sein – und bedarf dennoch der complicirtesten Maschinerien, sich zu verbergen [...]. Es ist in all seinem Thun eine Willkür. [...] Es schmerzt mich das, nicht weil ich immer mehr allein stehe, aber weil es ein traurig Gefühl ist mit Mitleid vor Dingen zu stehen, die man sonst mit scheuer Ehrfurcht kaum zu beurteilen wagte." *Joachim Briefe*, I:195, letter from Joachim to Gisela von Arnim, June 1, 1854.

such as [...] ‘Freedom and arbitrariness are fundamentally different things’ I heard uttered so frequently from his mouth in the thirty years of my acquaintance with him.”<sup>48</sup>

Joachim, then, habitually filtered his aesthetic judgment through the binary opposites of “arbitrariness” and “freedom,” and “arbitrariness” and “fatalism” of the emotions, philosophical ideas he most likely absorbed in the summer of 1853, when they were understood to be intrinsically relevant for the newly forming discipline of psychology. That Joachim’s experience in Göttingen also shaped his *compositional* thinking, including a strong notion of surrendering to his (creative) powers in order to manifest in tones his inner impressions, is unmistakably evident in a composition he composed only two months later, *Abendglocken*.

## **1.2 Abendglocken as Psychological Music**

If Joachim’s unique compositional approach can be said to pertain to his music of the 1850s, *Abendglocken* is a prime example that demonstrates how it all began. The subjective, emotionally laden experience that inspired *Abendglocken* relates to a critical

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<sup>48</sup> “Sätze wie ... ‘Freiheit und Willkür sind grundverschiedene Dinge’... habe ich in den dreißig Jahren meiner Bekanntschaft so häufig aus seinem Munde vernommen.” Andreas Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild. 1856-1907* (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms Gesellschaft, 1910), II:179.

event in Joachim's life in 1853.<sup>49</sup> He composed this piece after his broken engagement with Gisela von Arnim, as a letter exchange with Schumann confirms. On November 21, 1853, Schumann wrote to Joachim:

We [Clara and Robert] have a friend [Joachim] for whom we have much sympathy. He has told my wife with some seriousness that in the past few days something had been decided that might be significant for his entire life. Somewhat disturbed, my wife came to me and hinted that it probably concerned a withdrawn marriage proposal, whereupon I contributed several curses.<sup>50</sup>

Joachim's answer to Schumann on November 29, which included a copy of the Op. 5 pieces, directly points to *Abendglocken* (No. 2) as containing "the answer to the question of the engagement," and emphasizes in italics – "*I am not engaged.*"<sup>51</sup> Joachim also reveals that *Abendglocken* "should really be called *Malinconia*," explaining that although he and

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<sup>49</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:17; Joseph Joachim, *Letters from and to Joseph Joachim*, ed. and trans. Nora Bickley (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914), letter to Schumann on November 29, 1853, 41.

<sup>50</sup> "Wir haben einen Freund, an dem wir vielen Anteil nehmen. Dieser hat nun meiner Frau mit einem gewissen Ernst gesagt, dass in den vorigen Tagen sich etwas entschieden hätte, was für sein ganzes Leben von Bedeutung wäre. Meine Frau kam etwas bestürzt zu mir, und sie deutete an, dass das wohl eine zurückgegangene Bräutigamschaft wäre, worin ich auch mit einigen Verwünschungen einstimmt." Joachim, *Letters from and to Joseph Joachim*, 38.

<sup>51</sup> "Zugleich enthält das 2. Stück [...] die Antwort auf das Bräutigams-Kapitel [...]. Ich bin nicht verlobt." *Joachim Briefe*, I:108-109.

Gisela “were made for one another [...], a hostile power” has separated them.<sup>52</sup> Finally,

Joachim also expresses his musical indebtedness to Schumann:

This thick letter, which the post will bring to you in a foreign land [the Netherlands], will no doubt alarm you; but it is a musical letter, easier to lay aside than a letter in words. It must not disturb your comfort for long! I have looked forward to sending you the three pieces so that you, you generous man who has bestowed the richest gifts upon me, should receive at least a small portion of the bountiful fruit that I have harvested from your wealth.<sup>53</sup>

Schumann’s reaction to *Abendglocken* is not recorded, but no doubt he was alarmed, as

Joachim predicted, by the composer’s idiosyncratic use of musical ciphers, which to

Joachim represented “the small portion of the bountiful fruit . . . harvested from

[Schumann’s] wealth.”

In *Abendglocken*, Joachim explicitly refers to Schumann by using a motto from the so-called *F-A-E* Sonata, a joint composition of Schumann, Brahms and Albert Dietrich,

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<sup>52</sup> “Das 2. Stück [sollte] eigentlich *Malinconia* überschrieben sein [...]. Menschen können sich für wahlverwandt fühlen, können glauben, daß sie nur für einander geschaffen wären – und doch kann eine feindliche Gewalt wie praedestiniert sich immer im Leben zwischen sie drängen. Das habe ich erfahren.” Ibid., 108-109.

<sup>53</sup> “Sie sind gewiß erschrocken wegen des dicken Briefs, den der Postbote ins fremde Land bringt; aber es ist ein Notenbrief, der schneller zu beseitigen geht, wie ein Buchstabenbrief. Er soll Sie nicht lange der Behaglichkeit der Holländer entziehen! Ich wollte Ihnen gerne die 3 Stücke mittheilen, um Ihnen, großmüthiger Mann, der Sie mich immer mit den reichsten Gaben beschenken, wenigstens eine kleine Frucht von dem Guten, das ich zum Theil durch Ihren Reichtum erworben.” Ibid., 108-109.



dedicated and presented to Joachim during the fall of 1853.<sup>54</sup> Like the three composers of that sonata, Joachim also exploits the F-A-E cipher;<sup>55</sup> however, this motto alternates “in the course of the piece with three other notes, [which] have not only an artistic but a human significance for me.” The meaning of F-A-E, Joachim explained, was “frei aber einsam” (“free but lonesome”).<sup>56</sup> The “three other notes” are the musical letters of Gisela’s name, G-sharp-E-A (G-sharp is pronounced “gis” in German, and “A” is “la” according to the Western solmization system, which renders Gisela as G-sharp-E-A).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> John Daverio, *Crossing Paths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 76; 100-101; Michael Musgrave, *The Life of Schumann* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 156. See also Constantin Floros on Brahms and his circle, *Johannes Brahms. “Frei aber einsam: Ein Leben für eine poetische Musik”* (Hamburg: Arche, 1997).

<sup>55</sup> Borchard (*Stimme und Geige. Amalie und Joseph Joachim*, 135) mentions that the origin of Joachim’s motto F-A-E is unclear.

<sup>56</sup> “Die mit blauer Tinte accentuierten Schlußnoten F. A. E., welche schon im Verlaufe des Stückes mit 3 anderen Tönen immer alterniren [*sic*], haben nicht blos [*sic*] künstlerische, sondern allgemein menschliche Bedeutung für mich: ihr Sinn ist ‘frei aber einsam.’” *Joachim Briefe*, I:108-109.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 108-109. The G-sharp-E-A cipher is also prominent in other compositions of Joachim, the *Variationen über ein eigenes Thema* for viola and piano Op. 10 (1854); the short Andante written for Gisela on her birthday, on August 30, 1854, titled “Still und bewegt” (see Joachim’s comments on this piece in his letter of September 14, 1854); the *Notturmo* for violin Op. 12 (1858, published 1874); the Overture “In memoriam Heinrich von Kleist” Op. 13 (in the winds); the Violin Concerto in G Minor Op. 3 (1851-1852, published 1854); in the “Hungarian” Violin Concerto Op. 11; and in transposed ways, the Violin Concerto in G Major, No. 3 (begun 1854, first performed 1864 and revised before 1889). The *Notturmo*, which also includes the cipher F-A-E, was dedicated many years later to Gabriele Wendheim, Joachim’s later student. The strong emphasis on G-sharp-E-A (highlighted with *espressivo* etc.) suggests that Gisela was the dedicatee, at least in spirit. The ciphers in the Violin Concertos, Op. 3 and 11, were pointed out in Andreas Meyer’s

Although indebted to Schumann, Joachim applied the ciphers rather differently than had Schumann in the *F-A-E* Sonata or other cipher pieces. Succinctly, Joachim took Schumann's approach to musical ciphers a step further, by saturating the music of *Abendglocken* with them and by deploying a distinctive notational feature, which further highlights them.

A letter to Gisela from December 1852 suggests that it was in Weimar that Joachim conceived the idea of using the three letters of her name. Fatuously in love, he wanted to create a musical monument for her, a "Denkmal für aller Zeiten Glück," which indicates that the relationship then was unclouded.<sup>58</sup> The letter speaks of his bliss and refers to the G-sharp-E-A motto as involving a rising sixth:

What makes me so happy, oh, if I could tell you, [my] beautiful, lovely, and wonderful, through the most beautiful songs! Oh, if I could play it on soulful strings so that the tones' wings would sound to your heart! Oh, could I paint it with glowing colors onto the purest blue sky at twilight, so that gleaming it may reflect from your eyes! Oh, could I carve it on granite in the deepest forest, an eternal monument of eternal happiness! What music has been to me, that is your

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article "Zum Violinkonzert in einem Satz," in *Anklaenge* 2008. *Joseph Joachim (1831-1907): Europäischer Bürger, Komponist, Virtuose*, ed. Michele Calella and Christian Glanz (Vienna: Mille Tre, 2008), 133-135.

<sup>58</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 5, letter written during the night, December 3-4, 1853.

being. Your being envelopes her [e.g. music] so that I am unable to distinguish between you and my art.<sup>59</sup>



Joachim never realized this particular idealized vision of the composition. However, during the fall of 1853, spurred on by two events – the breakup of his engagement and receiving the *F-A-E* Sonata – he did return to the idea of writing a cipher piece. But by then his hope was extinguished, and what was to have been a musical monument for Gisela instead became a metaphor for his own abject melancholy.<sup>60</sup> Reflecting his

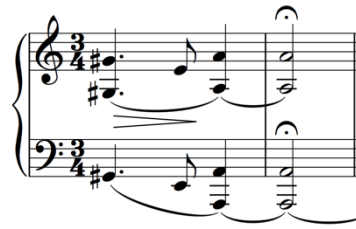
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<sup>59</sup> “Was mich so glücklich macht, o könnt ich’s, Reine, Gute, Holde, Dir sagen in den schönsten Liedern! O könnt’ ich es spielen auf beseelten Saiten, dass es in der Töne Schwingen Dir klänge mit ans Herz! O könnt’ ich in der Abenddämmerung es glühend färben auf des Himmels reinstes Blau, dass es in Deinen Augen dürfte leuchtend wiederstrahlen! O könnt ich es weißeln im tiefsten Wald auf Ur-Granit, ein ewig Denkmal für aller Zeiten Glück! Was mir Musik gewesen, das ist mir Dein Sein. Dein Wesen schließt mit sie ein, dass ich nicht zu scheiden weiß, was Du, was meine Kunst.” Ibid., 1.

<sup>60</sup> Gisela’s reaction to *Abendglocken* is recorded. In 1856 she wrote in a letter to Eduard Mörike: “. . . three pieces by Joseph Joachim [...] are my pride, as they are dedicated to me, and I like them so much. You love music, yes, naturally – and know musicians. Give them the pieces and let them play them, – but, if I may ask, don’t judge them after the first hearing, for if I am in favour of music that one immediately understands or feels, there are nevertheless things, that certainly first require the advance effect of an already familiar musical character, and therefore are pleasing only at a [later] point when their master will be known through lighter things and will have emerged [as a composer]. So with these pieces we must hear them a second or third time to feel their original, independent nature not yet familiar to us; then we will like them more and more. . . I like very much the sounds of the bells, as they blur together in the festive evening and finally clash together. O that is splendid, as if heaven itself were storming because of their strong pull.” (“Drei Stücke von Joseph Joachim, die mein Stolz sind, weil sie mir gewidmet sind, und ich sie so gern habe. Sie lieben Musik, ja natürlich – und kennen Musiker. Geben Sie es denen und lassen Sie es sich vorspielen, – urteilen aber, wenn ich bitten darf, nicht gleich beim ersten Hören, denn wenn ich auch für Musiken bin, die man gleich versteht oder fühlt, so gibt es doch Sachen, die

personal experience, *Abendglocken* plays out Joachim's lament over his separation from Gisela, and captures in candid musical terms his emotional state.

We shall begin with the mottos. The main one is G-sharp-E-A, which opens the piece, announced in stark octaves by the piano:

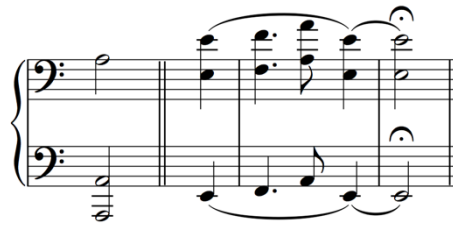


**Example 1, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 1-2)**

Note that this version of the G-sharp-E-A motto does not contain the rising sixth recorded in Joachim's letter a year before, but rather a falling gesture that stresses the leading-tone function of G-sharp. This motto is joined by the second motto, F-A-E, which first appears briefly in bar 15 in the bass and then occurs prominently in bar 19, once again in octaves.

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gewissermaßen erst das Vorwirken eines schon bekannten musikalischen Characters erfordern, daher erst gefallen, wenn ihr Meister, durch anderes leichteres bekannt und durchgedrungen ist. So müssen wir an diesen Stücken erst beim zweiten oder dritten mal Hören, eine uns noch nicht bekannte originelle und selbständige Natur herausempfinden, dann haben wir sie immer lieber... [...] Sehr lieb habe ich das Glockenläuten, wie sie durcheinander gehn am Festabend und zuletzt alle durcheinander stürmen. O das ist herrlich, als würde der Himmel erstürmt, weil die so stark ziehn.") Eva Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht* (Stuttgart: Hirzel, 2004), 95, original Ms. at the Deutsches Literatur Archiv, Marbach, #2951.



**Example 2, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 19-21)**

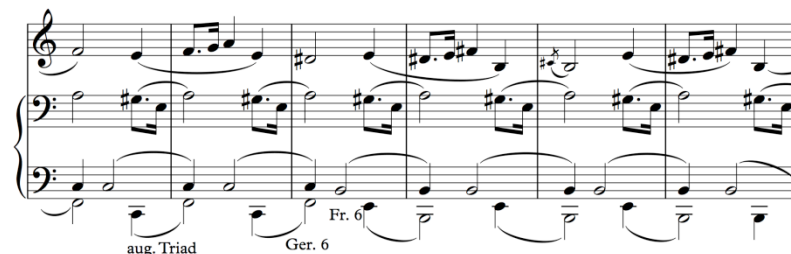
A brief glance at the mottos reveals that one is the mirror inversion of the other. Thus, the half-step leading tone G-sharp-A is reversed in the F-A-E motto to the falling “sigh” gesture of F-E. Joachim highlights the half-step relationship by rhythmically manipulating the mottos, lingering on the first and third pitches – the half-step – and shortening the second pitch to an eighth note.

Like Beethoven’s “Muss es sein?” and “Es muss sein!” Joachim’s two mottos seem to suggest a motivic sequence, though Beethoven’s answering motives, unlike Joachim’s, trace approximations, not literal statements, of mirror inversion (see Ex. 3). Both composers lay out a sequence involving question and answer. Beethoven’s first motto provides an opening gesture, which functions as a question, and the second a closing gesture, which functions as an answer. In contrast, Joachim reverses the question-answer effect harmonically. His G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E mottos suggest instead a paired answer and question: Their initial presentation inclines harmonically toward the tonic for the G-sharp-E-A motto, the answer, toward the dominant for the F-A-E motto, which functions like a question (half-cadence vs. full-cadence implication).



**Example 3, Beethoven, *Der schwer gefasste Entschluss*, String Quartet Op. 135**

Significantly, as *Abendglocken* continues – it unfolds in a three-part, *ABA'* form, with the outer sections centered on the tonic A minor and the middle section in the parallel major – Joachim manipulates his mottos by challenging their tonic and dominant sides, and by charting a course that gradually separates the two mottos, thereby suggesting their disunity. Thus, in mm. 23ff. (Ex. 4), he repeatedly exploits the G-sharp-E-A motto in the piano part in rather telling ways.



**Example 4, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 23ff.)**

The G-sharp-E major third in the right hand of the piano part forms an augmented triad with the C in the left hand, a harmony that the New German theorist C. F. Weitzmann championed in 1853 – the very year of *Abendglocken* – for its progressive multiple meanings, or “Mehrdeutigkeit.”<sup>61</sup> Joachim uses the augmented triad to capture the harmonic swaying between the implied, but not yet realized, key of A minor (on the

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<sup>61</sup> Carl Weitzmann, *Der Uebermaessige Dreiklang* (Berlin: Trautweinsche Buch- und Musikalienhandlung, J. Guttentag, 1853), 13-15.

third beat of each bar), the harmonic “home” of G-sharp-E-A, and F major (beats one and two). In the first two measures the pitch A of G-sharp-E-A is harmonized in F major, and then by dissonances such as German and French augmented-sixth chords and a dominant-seventh chord, all of which undermine the tonic-centeredness of the original from the opening of *Abendglocken*. A similar case in point is the F-A-E motto (Ex. 5).



**Example 5, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 46-47)**

Here Joachim does not stress the prominent leading-tone attraction from F to E, as impelling a motion toward resolution, but rather the opposite. The pitch E, originally heard as a stable dominant, here appears as part of a dominant-seventh (and, later, diminished-seventh chord), so that it clashes against the octave F in the bass, and alternates with its resolution, F major. In short, both mottos explore harmonic instability and dissonance as one means of emphasizing their disunity, which also determines the mottos' fate in the course of the piece.

Only once do the mottos appear together in their original guise, and then in succession as Joachim attempts to build a plagal cadence, only to frustrate its anticipated conclusion by turning unexpectedly to C major, or III (see Ex. 6).



**Example 6, Joachim, *Abendglocken*, Frustrated Plagal Cadence (mm. 43-45)**

Separation of the mottos also occurs in the central *B* section in A major. While the violin melody hints at a dream-like happiness (the violin part perhaps embodying Joachim), the mottos alternate in the piano accompaniment but remain sharply separated; also, a few measures after the key change to the major mode, Joachim adapts the F-A-E motto to F#-A-E (see score, m. 98). We might wonder why the composer did not depict the mottos in an idealized, that is, unified fashion; notably, he did not. Rather, Joachim apparently intended to capture the present – his separation from Gisela – instead of a romanticized past, haunted by memories of his longed-for union with her.



**Example 7, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 87-90)**

A dark, somber tone pervades the outer sections of *Abendglocken*, cast in a pale A minor. The parallel major of the *B* section impresses as a brief, dreamlike reverie. A letter from 1854, furthermore, reveals that Joachim viewed A major symbolically as Gisela's key. His letter ends: "O you soulful G# [= "Giss"]-Seele [soul; a pun on Gisela], you



leading tone to the passionate A major in my inner soul,"<sup>62</sup> thereby connecting Gisela to A major while also stressing the importance of the leading tone in the G-sharp-E-A motto.

The dream-like qualities of the *B* section and their stark contrast with the unadorned, motto-determined, real-life imagery of the *A* section are further elucidated in another letter from Joachim to Gisela. In January 1854, he revealed to Gisela that he had originally intended to title the three pieces of Op. 5 *Wirkliches und Geträumtes* (*The Real and the Dreamed*), but in the end thought the better of the plan in order to avoid further gossip about his engagement or envisioned marriage.<sup>63</sup> And, as if to record the emotional realness of his situation, Joachim used the last eight measures of the piece to invoke the time-honored topos of the lament by tracing two descending tetrachords, A-G-sharp-G-F-sharp-F-E in the violin, and D-C-sharp-C-B-B-flat-A in the piano (Ex. 8).

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<sup>62</sup> "O! Du . . . Gis-Seele, du Leitton zum feurigen A-dur in meinem Inneren." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 35, letter of April 29, 1854.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, letter of January 11, 1854.



**Example 8, Joachim, *Abendglocken*, Descending Chromatic Tetrachord (mm. 158-165)**

Joachim's use of motives in *Abendglocken* captures with unmistakable frankness his sombre mental state. Even when the music of the middle section veers into his vision of the "Geträumtes," the piano accompaniment, as we saw in Ex. 7, remains firmly tethered to the "Wirkliches" – his loss. Most conspicuously, the mottos recur here in a persistent, repetitive pattern that borders on obsession, as if elicited by that outside power which, the composer thought, had interfered in his relationship with his *Wahlverwandte* (elective affinity) "as if fated." Each motto is repeated several times before its complement is heard – G-sharp-E-A appears in the right hand and F-A-E (and later F#-A-E) in the left hand of the piano part (Ex. 7). There could not be a starker contrast to the sweet melody in the violin part; perhaps the unrelenting fixation on the

mottos, indeed, symbolizes the “hostile power,” disturbing the harmonious musings of the melody, as Joachim intimated in his letter to Schumann.

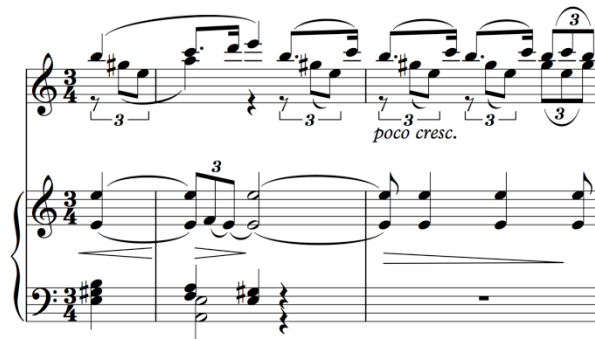
A similarly pronounced use of the mottos occurs near the end of *Abendglocken*, over the lament-like descent in the final measures shown above in Ex. 8. As the chromatic tetrachord unfolds in the bass, the F-A-E motto is heard in the violin in an unvarnished manner, as if frozen in place, or “trapped.” This motivic device is typical of Joachim’s style of the 1850s, for it appears not only in *Abendglocken*, but also in his three contemporaneous overtures.<sup>64</sup>

In Ex. 8, after the violin delineates its own lament-like descending tetrachord from A to E, Joachim subjects the three-note F-A-E motto to a rhythmic pattern of four sixteenth-notes, which effectively commingle two rhythmically separate iterations of F-A-E – one in the literal succession of sixteenth notes, sounding as if the F-A-E motive is “trapped,” and the other articulated by the sixteenth notes falling on the beat. But what, we might ask, happens to the G-sharp-E-A motive in the last section of *Abendglocken*? In addition to a rather prominent appearance at the beginning of the last double-stop passage in the violin (Ex. 9), it is woven into the texture of the chromatic descent, in the

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<sup>64</sup> Between 1853 and 1855 Joachim wrote three: *Overture to Hamlet* Op. 4, *Overture to Demetrius* Op. 6, and *Overture to Henry IV* Op. 7, all of which make use of such “trapped” motives.

order A-G-sharp-E (mm. 158-159, Ex. 8). Here the motto becomes cloaked, as it were, contrary to its explicit appearances elsewhere in *Abendglocken*.



Example 9, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 149-150)

In the closing mm. Joachim furthermore unites the two mottos, again in a rather implicit, as we shall see, Schumannesque manner. The violin part between bar 153 and bar 157 descends in alternating thirds and sixths,<sup>65</sup> which at first sight do not betray any similarity with F-A-E or G-sharp-E-A (note, however, that in the piano part both mottos do sound explicitly; see Ex. 10). However, a second glance confirms that Joachim does nevertheless use the notes of both ciphers. All four notes – E, F, G-sharp, A – occur in an unordered, interrupted series in the violin, so that the mottos effectively disappear from our view in ever fainter traces. This encoding of the mottos contrasts markedly with their realistic depiction throughout much of the piece, where the mottos typically create

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<sup>65</sup> This passage of alternating thirds and sixths is written in an unidiomatic, highly virtuosic style, as if for the piano. Such writing occurs in the Violin Concerto in G Major as well, and underscores that considerations of technical execution were not a priority in Joachim's compositional decisions. Perhaps Schumann's Toccata Op. 7 served the composer as a model for this passage.

a frozen, static landscape. Veiling the mottos, masking them in an almost *imaginary* way is a compositional procedure reminiscent and indeed worthy of Schumann. Joachim's intent seems to be to manipulate his motives and to sharpen the distinction between the real and dreamed, only, in the end, to dwell on the real. His brooding, melancholic *Abendglocken*, far from capturing an idealized portrait of Gisela, becomes, in effect, a forthright self-portrait, a record of "the emotions saved from the abyss."



**Example 10, Joachim, *Abendglocken* (mm. 153-157)**

That the F-A-E cipher remained significant even after *Abendglocken*, speaks from his signature in a letter of 1854, when his relationship with Gisela had caught a glimpse of hope and F-A-E, albeit temporarily, meant "für alle Ewigkeit."<sup>66</sup> And two years later Joachim drew again upon *Abendglocken* in an entirely different context. He wove the pair of ciphers, F-A-E and G-sharp-E-A into counterpoint exercises exchanged with Brahms in 1856 (and, more sporadically, until 1861). Here Joachim skillfully used the ciphers in markedly erudite studies of academic character, including an unrealized two-voice inversion canon on F-A-E and G-sharp-E-A, an E-A-F fugue with subject and answer, a

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<sup>66</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 51, letter from the summer of 1854.

two-voice canon over an F-A-E – G-sharp-E-A bass, and, a singular seven-voice piece in which the bass, as David Brodbeck puts it, “tellingly, unites the Gisela and Joachim mottos in a kind of musical marriage – [...] imitated, in retrograde motion, by the tenor.”<sup>67</sup> The experience of his counterpoint exercises, at utter odds with the forward-looking aesthetic of the New German School, posed significant challenges that forced Joachim to confront his low compositional self-esteem and indeed eventually contributed to his decision to give up composing. Above all, we can infer from his reuse of the mottos – representing in one exercise his symbolic marriage to Gisela – that Joachim was, even three years after *Abendglocken*, still “einsam aber frei” (hence the retrograde E-A-F), and that even the most complex contrapuntal study of ciphers, such as that in seven voices, could not restore the happiness of his early Weimar days with Gisela.

### **1.3 *Abendglocken and Ciphers***

No doubt Joachim would have known of Robert Schumann’s extensive experiments with ciphers, and of his habit of embedding in his compositions veiled or partially veiled allusions, references, and quotations. As a point of comparison between

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<sup>67</sup> David Brodbeck, “The Brahms-Joachim Counterpoint Exchange: or, Robert, Clara, and ‘the Best Harmony between Jos. and Joh,’” in *Brahms Studies 1*, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1994), 35-36, 45.

the two composers, we might briefly reconsider Schumann's *Carnaval* Op. 9 (1834-1835), which reveals an intimate world in which "musical and extra-musical symbol"<sup>68</sup> co-exist and inform each other. The extrovert Florestan and introvert Eusebius, Schumann's two chief personae, belong to a group of half or wholly fictional characters "all united under the banner of the league of David against the Philistines."<sup>69</sup> Florestan most closely represented Schumann's self-image.<sup>70</sup> In *Carnaval*, Schumann makes use of the ciphers A-S-C-H and S-C-H-A. The first cipher (A, E-flat, C, and B) refers to Asch (today Aš in the Czech Republic), the hometown of Ernestine von Fricken with whom he was then romantically involved. The second, through a circular permutation of the former, generates the musical letters of Schumann's name (i.e. "S" [Es=E-flat], C, H, and A), and thereby produces his own cipher.

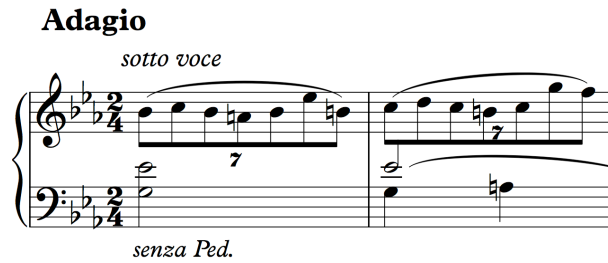
In "Eusebius," the cipher A-S-C-H (A-E-flat-C-B) appears in the right hand as part of an eighth-note septuplet, specifically as the fourth and sixth notes of the first measure and the first and fourth notes of the second measure.

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<sup>68</sup> Peter Kaminsky, "Principles of Formal Structure in Schumann's Early Piano Cycles," *Music Theory Spectrum* 11, No. 2 (1989): 225.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Ostwald, "Florestan, Eusebius, Clara, and Schumann's Right Hand," *19th-Century Music* 4, No. 1 (1980): 20.



**Example 11, R. Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9 ("Eusebius")**

Schumann's masking of the cipher in "Eusebius" contrasts markedly with the following piece, "Florestan."<sup>71</sup> While the former is in E-flat major, marked Adagio and, in addition, played *sotto voce*, the latter is in G minor, and marked *Passionato*. In "Florestan" the cipher A-S-C-H is explicitly stated in the first measure in the treble, where it appears in its original guise:



**Example 12, Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9 ("Florestan")**

Deploying the cipher as a head motive or cell from which the movement is constructed is more typical of Schumann than the concealed use in "Eusebius."<sup>72</sup> But for our purposes, besides subtle differences between Schumann's and Joachim's approaches,

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 211.



what distinguishes the two composers is the relative frequency of ciphers or cipher-like motives in their music. Simply put, Schumann's ciphers never occupy nearly the amount of musical space as they do in Joachim's *Abendglocken*, where altogether "Gis-e-la" is heard nearly 120 times in a movement of 160 measures (a similar frequency obtains with the F-A-E cipher). The artful concealment of A-S-C-H in "Eusebius" accords with Schumann's general principle of not publicly disclosing the meaning of his ciphers, except to his immediate circle. Joachim's ciphers operate in a fundamentally different way: one can hardly neglect or overhear them, although Joachim did not announce their significance to a wide audience (after all, the title of his piece is *Abendglocken*, not "Gisela").<sup>73</sup> Musically, Schumann's ciphers were subtle enough to pass as riddles to be decoded, as Schumann, commenting on his *Carnaval*, observed to Ignaz Moscheles: "Deciphering my musical masked ball will be a real game for you."<sup>74</sup> One thinks, for example, of the humorous, all too brief interjection of the *Marseillaise* in the *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, where the anthem is distorted rhythmically and metrically,

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<sup>73</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 116; Constantin Floros, "Schumanns musikalische Poetik," in *Musik-Konzepte. Sonderband Robert Schumann*, edited by Heinz Klaus Metzger and Rainer Riehn (München: Edition Text und Kritik, 1981), 93, 99; Michael Musgrave writes that Schumann was reticent about publicly discussing his music: "Any artificial instigation of public opinion by the artist himself is an abomination to me. Whatever is strong will make its own way." See *The Life of Schumann* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 92.

<sup>74</sup> Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 75, letter from Schumann to Ignaz Moscheles, 23 August 1837; *Schumanns Briefe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1904), 92.

or the cipher-like encrypting of E-H-E (E-B-E) in *Mondesnacht* from the *Eichendorff Liederkreis*, where the motto is blurred by its positioning in the deep bass of the piano part and by the use of open pedal.<sup>75</sup>

John Daverio describes the use of ciphers, or “sphinxes” (as Schumann himself referred to them), in *Carnaval*, Op. 9, as agents of “connections, [which] imbue the work with a measure of ‘Witz’ (wit).”<sup>76</sup> Wit and humor are clearly missing in Joachim’s reality-based and consistently dark *Abendglocken*. Lawrence Kramer has related Schumann’s characters Eusebius and Florestan to examples of “impersonation, a point that the design of *Carnaval* makes explicit.” As in E. T. A. Hoffmann’s novels, Kramer argues, Schumann’s splitting into multiple personae is consistent, whereas the question of whose voice in this group of characters represents Schumann’s own can yield different answers.<sup>77</sup> This multiplicity of personae (achieved through varied motivic usage and contrasting keys and dance characters) differs conspicuously from Joachim’s psychological portrait, which uses ciphers to underscore his sentiments, in which

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<sup>75</sup> R. Larry Todd, “On Quotation in Schumann’s Music,” in *Schumann and His World*, edited by R. Larry Todd (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 81-89.

<sup>76</sup> John Daverio and Eric Sams, “Schumann, Robert,” *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40704pg6> (accessed October 25, 2012).

<sup>77</sup> Lawrence Kramer, “A New Self: Schumann at 40,” *The Musical Times* 148, No. 1898 (2007): 9.

somber tones prevail. Extending this line of thought, Schumann's "Eusebius" and "Florestan" display varied approaches to ciphers in order to generate contrasting characters, whereas Joachim's G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E motives undergo almost identical musical treatments. In short, Joachim's use of ciphers, although clearly inspired by Schumann, is less playful than Schumann's. For Schumann the use of ciphers was a game; for Joachim it was a way of encoding a psychological truth – his preoccupation with Gisela.

#### **1.4 *Abendglocken* and *Daguerreotypes***

If *Abendglocken* lays bare Joachim's state of mind in 1853 through the use of persistent, explicit ciphers, the score also presents a distinctive notational feature that encourages us to explore one other critical line of interpretation, through a visual analogy to early photography. Joachim makes abundant use of double bars in *Abendglocken*, which appear to assume a framing function. The double bar is a notational device usually limited in the nineteenth century to changes of key and meter, or to ends of structural sections. Altogether, *Abendglocken* has eleven double bars placed within its 165 measures. Of these, six do coincide with meter or key changes. But the other five serve another, more complex, and not readily evident purpose. They appear initially after the first three notes of the piece, the opening presentation of the Gisela motto (Ex.

1, above); similarly, two more pairs frame the first presentation of the F-A-E motto (Ex. 2) and the only presentation of the two mottos together (Ex. 6). These three incidences seem intended to frame the mottos, first individually and then together. Before venturing an interpretation of their significance, we should note that there is precious little literature about this notational phenomenon, although, as Barry Cooper's recent study reminds us, Beethoven had prominently used this device.<sup>78</sup> In fact, examples from different periods and genres are not uncommon.<sup>79</sup> Cooper argues that for Beethoven the double bar is not only an important structural device, but also one that "can yield important insights that cannot be achieved by other means."<sup>80</sup> This view is relevant as well for *Abendglocken*, in which Joachim seems to use double bars deliberately to frame musical spaces and draw our attention to them. But what is their meaning? At the most transparent level Joachim emphasizes visually the importance of G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E, and their obsessive reiterations. Furthermore, double bars, at least in Beethoven, have interpretative meaning for the performer, suggesting a brief pause, or stretching of time. But the double bars could also suggest that Joachim was visually freezing time, attempting to capture specific musical moments, framing and preserving them for

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<sup>78</sup> Barry Cooper, "Beethoven and the Double Bar," *Music and Letters* 88/3 (2007): 461.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

posterity analogous to early cameras. Joachim's framing device could be interpreted as evoking early photography, the revolutionary new technology to which Joachim's generation was among the first to have significant access. And the "photographic" freezing of (musical) moments could conceivably relate to Joachim's announced desire to create a "psychology of tones" that would reflect in candid detail his emotions.

Incidentally, both Joachim and Gisela had their daguerreotypes taken during the 1850s, shortly after Joachim's Weimar period and the time of his infatuation with her. Responding to daguerreotypes and photographs that she had sent him in December 1853, Joachim wrote that he preferred the least idealized one, which he viewed as more representative of her: "The nicest, however, is the daguerreotype – but not the overly idealized one, which has a lurking ["lauernd"] expression rather foreign to you."<sup>81</sup> The romanticized, idealized notion of which Joachim disapproved is indeed largely absent from *Abendglocken*, in which the composer instead favored an unadorned, stark perspective not foreign to the daguerreotype. The lurking expression may have referred

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<sup>81</sup> "Das schönste ist aber doch das Daguerreotyp – aber nicht das veridealisierte – das hat einen lauernden Zug, der Dir ganz fremd ist." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 17, letter after Christmas 1853.

to the specific features of the medium, which produced an “uncanny, ghost-like” impression on the viewer.<sup>82</sup>

The invention of the daguerreotype in France in 1837<sup>83</sup> coincided with Henry Fox Talbot’s invention of the calotype in England.<sup>84</sup> Whereas the latter used an easily reproducible<sup>85</sup> negative-to-positive process involving transparent paper to project the image onto its final medium (paper),<sup>86</sup> the daguerreotype stood out as “a unique and irreproducible photographic image made *in* the camera on a sensitized silvered metal plate,” which featured the captured object *in reverse*, i.e. a “mirror” image.<sup>87</sup> Thus, the silver plate of the daguerreotype created a positive image inside the capturing device –

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<sup>82</sup> Snyder, Joel, et al, “Photography,” *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics, Oxford Art Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0400> (accessed November 26, 2012).

<sup>83</sup> Grant B. Romer, “Daguerre, Louis,” *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T021143> (accessed November 17, 2012).

<sup>84</sup> J. P. Ward, et al, “Photography,” *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T067117pg2> (accessed November 20, 2012).

<sup>85</sup> Stephen C. Pinson, *Speculating Daguerre* (London; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), 11.

<sup>86</sup> Nic Leonhardt, *Piktoral-Dramaturgie: Visuelle Kultur und Theater im 19. Jahrhundert (1869-1899)* (Bielefeld: Transcript - Verlag für Kommunikation, Kultur und soziale Praxis, 2007), 90.

<sup>87</sup> Richard Brettel, *Modern Art 1851-1929: Capitalism and Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 46 [my italics].

and not a negative image that then could generate a positive print, as in the calotype.<sup>88</sup> Daguerreotypes were mirror-like, first, because of their shiny, smooth, silvery surface and second, because of the mirror-like reversing of the image.<sup>89</sup> Also striking was the above-mentioned haunting effect of daguerreotypes on viewers, caused by the “image's capacity to negate itself when viewed in another light at another angle, to cancel itself into shadow, and rematerialize, as it were, from within itself [...], flipping from negative to positive and back, which accounts for the flickering effect [and] makes the daguerrean image seem [...] alive.”<sup>90</sup> The flipping and flickering effects of the image, depending on light and angle, were key characteristics of the new invention.<sup>91</sup>

For Joachim, Gisela, and their generation, the advent of the daguerreotype shook to the core traditional beliefs about the nature and limits of representation in painting and the graphic arts. The new prospect of capturing a “surreal level of detail” and the

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<sup>88</sup> J. P. Ward, et al, “Photography,” *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*.

<sup>89</sup> Richard Brettel, *Modern Art 1851-1929: Capitalism and Representation*, 46. One obvious indicator of the daguerreotype's right-left reversal was men's clothing, often shown with buttons featured on the left side of garments while in reality they were on the right (closing left over right). While objects such as musical instruments were often physically reversed so that they appeared correctly on the daguerreotype, this adjustment would have been impracticable for clothing.

<sup>90</sup> Snyder, Joel, et al, “Photography,” *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics. Oxford Art Online*.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

candid “entrapment of more visual information than the eye could perceive”<sup>92</sup> was a decisive historical and cultural event – external objects were effectively captured as they actually were.



**Illustration 1, Daguerreotypes of Joseph Joachim (1856)<sup>93</sup> and Gisela von Arnim (1857)<sup>94</sup>**

In the new medium of photography, represented in Illustration 1 by two daguerreotypes of Gisela von Arnim and Joachim from 1857 and 1856, subjectivity – at

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>93</sup> The daguerreotype of Joachim is printed in Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, CD accompanying the book.

<sup>94</sup> The daguerreotype of Gisela mentioned in the 1853 letter above is inaccessible. This image is printed in Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*, 121.



the core of older traditions of romanticism – conflicted with a heightened detachment and objectivity, which aimed at “objective representation of contemporary social reality,” but arguably was still in many ways highly subjective.<sup>95</sup> In *Abendglocken*, a similar conflict is exposed, where Joachim’s emotion-laden compositional approach, though affected by the new empiricism of the nascent discipline of psychology, meets the objectivity of frames (or double bars), and musical likenesses (or ciphers), which invert themselves, flip in right-left reversal, and show signs of mechanical (obsessive) repetition, just like the daguerreotype. In effect we can observe, in *Abendglocken* and the daguerreotype, a clash, arguably related in part to the dawning “spirit of positivism”:<sup>96</sup> the attempt to strip away from an impression its various romanticized accretions and capturing it “as it is.”

Joachim’s double bars reveal a heightened interest in framing musical moments and possibly relate to the technological novelty of the daguerreotype, which brought to light a new way of viewing the world – with sharpness and with frames. The abrupt, raw edges of a daguerreotype presented real challenges to early viewers who attempted

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<sup>95</sup> Robert C. Holub, *Reflections on Realism: Paradox, Norm, and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century German Prose* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 14.

<sup>96</sup> Karnes (in *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna*, 9) cites Bojan Bujić, ed., *Music in European Thought, 1851–1912*, Cambridge Readings in the Literature of Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 305.

to remedy the sharpness with paint or oval enclosures (as in the daguerreotypes of Illustration 1).<sup>97</sup> *Abendglocken* has visual frames – double bars – for locating its motives, which are often placed in bold, sharp relief, like so many daguerreotypes.





There is also another way in which Joachim's music may have been influenced by the daguerreotype and its novel perspective on the world – the daguerreotype's characteristic right-left reversal of the image. This idiosyncrasy significantly challenged the new medium's "objectivity." A case in point is Joachim's daguerreotype above (Ill. 1). The image presents the composer with his violin, on which he rests his hand. But in this daguerreotype the hand in question is his right hand, that is, the hand with which a violinist usually holds the bow. Resting the right hand on the fingerboard seems peculiar and suggests that Joachim was left-handed, which he was not; typically violinists' photographs show the left hand in contact with the strings or the fingerboard. Just as this daguerreotype reverses reality, so too does Joachim's music display signs of musical reversal, especially in his manipulation of his ciphers.

Specifically the daguerreotype's right-left reversal of the object may have influenced the composer's approach to ciphers. Let us now re-examine the reversal of the G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E mottos in *Abendglocken*, to test the hypothesis. It appears that

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<sup>97</sup> M. Susan Barger and William B. White, *The Daguerreotype* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 38; 201.

the two serve as the opening mottos of larger formal sections and set in motion a curious pattern of reversal, related to the fact that F-A-E is the inversion of G-sharp-E-A. For a summary of the reversals, see the diagram in Ex. 13.

<i>A</i> Section	<i>B</i> Section		<i>A'</i> Section
mm. 1-19; 19-42	mm. 43-128		mm. 129-165
			

**Example 13, Joachim, *Abendglocken*  
F-A-E and G-sharp-E-A articulating formal sections**

First to appear in double bars – at the beginning of the piece – is the G-sharp-E-A motto (mm. 1-18), which permeates the music until the next framed motto follows in mirror inversion as F-A-E (mm. 19-42). The inverted motto then dominates that section until the central *B* section delimited by double bars joins the two mottos in intimate conjunction (mm. 43-128). Throughout, the static mottos retain their distinct three-note shape and frozen appearance, and cast their shadow onto each formal section that they introduce.

From this perspective the entire piece can be seen as a reduction, in which the mottos flip from their real position to the (mirror-) inversion and back, just as the daguerreotype confronts the viewer with a real, captured object but then distorts it

through its mirror inversion recorded on the metal plate. Knowing that the daguerreotype reverses the original object, the viewer presumably “corrected” the image in his imagination while viewing the daguerreotype, thus generating a second image and mentally juxtaposing it to the daguerrean image.<sup>98</sup>

Another example of musical reversal can be traced in the middle *B* section of *Abendglocken* in A major, where, as discussed above, the mottos alternate in strict succession between the right and left hand, respectively.



**Example 14, Joachim, *Abendglocken*, Reduced to F-A-E and G-sharp-E-A (mm. 87-96)**

Here (Ex. 14) the reversals occur more rapidly, a figuration in dialogue, and without the obvious separation of the framing double bars in the previous examples. In the last section, *A'*, Joachim conceals even further the process of reversal. But the frequency with which each motto is heard in circular, repetitive fashion, “trapped” and static, creates two alternating planes of sound – G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E – which, while not framed by double bars, also support the analogy of a mirror-inversed image. *A'* features a concealed reversal of the mottos. Here the piano presents the F-A-E motto in an expanded version, commingled with F-E-A before the violin enters and captures the

<sup>98</sup> Ward, et al, “Photography,” *Grove Art Online*. *Oxford Art Online*.

reversal, G-sharp-E-A, in double stops. This mode of reversal is repeated six times (mm. 129-134), and then, after a brief interruption, six times again (mm. 144-149) before giving way to the descending tetrachord lament, which brings *Abendglocken* to its close.

Joachim's "realist" lens is most striking in his use of the mottos, emphasized beyond all due measure in "trapped" forms that methodically construct static harmonic and melodic landscapes. Like the frame of an image, the double bars freeze the mottos in time. If this application of the double bars is unusual and novel for Joachim's time, other elements in *Abendglocken* betray a backward-looking orientation to early romanticism. For example, Joachim's harmonic progressions in this piece do not venture into the complexities explored by contemporary composers like Franz Liszt in his symphonic poems and Joachim's friend Hans von Bülow in his *Nirwana* Overture (1854). The rather conservative middle section of *Abendglocken* in A major, indeed, uses largely consonant tonality and symmetrical phrasing, perhaps a vestige of Joachim's traditional training in Leipzig under Moritz Hauptmann. But this stylistic rift between Joachim's progressive aesthetic evoking features of the daguerreotype and his traditional treatment of harmony and melody is inherently characteristic of his style, which sways between the new and the old, Liszt and Schumann, objective (scientific) observation and romantic emotion and subjectivity.

Regarding objectivity, Kevin C. Karnes notes that Hanslick's *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854) aimed to explain music from a scientifically inspired angle, fostering "a mode of investigation that valorized empirical observation and inductive reasoning."<sup>99</sup> Hanslick's and others' writings in the 1850s do reveal a fascination with understanding music from an angle involving "methods of the natural sciences."<sup>100</sup> But precisely what these 'methods' should be was unclear,<sup>101</sup> not least because of the difficulty that arose when addressing the subjective from a scientific angle, which can be grasped as clearly in Hanslick's work as in Joachim's fascination with visual techniques that evoke the daguerreotype. No less clear was how to apply empirical methods to the nascent discipline of psychology, which now took on a new significance for Joachim as he struggled to create his *Psychologische Musik*.<sup>102</sup>

We can now take a step back and reassess Joachim's position in the musical and cultural discourse of the early 1850s. Whereas contemporaries viewed his music as being

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<sup>99</sup> Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna*, 1-4.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., Karnes cites Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism*, 357.

<sup>101</sup> Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna*, 3-6.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 9.

rooted somewhere between “Schumann and Wagner,”<sup>103</sup> recent work has placed him “between Liszt and Schumann,”<sup>104</sup> or between the “strictness of Mendelssohn and the freedom of Liszt.”<sup>105</sup> Most often, however, he is associated with Brahms. Our analysis of *Abendglocken* and its musical ciphers has linked it to Schumann. But Joachim’s techniques, as well as the dark tone of *Abendglocken*, dramatically diverged from Schumann’s, whose approach to ciphers seemed to imply more often than not a twinkle in his eye, a sense of humor or irony.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, Joachim’s basic musical outlook - preoccupied with unchanged, original emotions – also diverged from that of Liszt; it corresponds, rather, to the new aesthetic paradigm emerging at the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in literature and culture, which reflected the new attention to detail and interest in *preserving*, which at the same time meant *observing*. Hence Joachim’s striking use of double bars, a notational analogy to the daguerreotype.

Furthermore, we have investigated Joachim’s interest in metaphysics, as he pondered questions that indeed belonged to the psychological discourse of the time. Joachim’s *Psychologische Musik* was sparked, if not initiated, by Heinrich Ritter’s seminar.

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<sup>103</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 14 (March 31, 1854), vol. 40.

<sup>104</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 119.

<sup>105</sup> Eshbach, “Der Geigerkönig: Joseph Joachim as Performer, “ 10.

<sup>106</sup> Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 100.

While it may be impossible to determine the details of how Joachim's emotions as the basis of "psychological music" influenced his compositions, his own views about composing are laid out in his letters and in his *Abendglocken*. They offer an avenue toward deeper analytical and historical understanding, conducive to viewing Joachim in his own right, rather than "between *a* and *b*," where *a* can stand for Liszt and *b* for Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, and/or Beethoven, an approach previously favored by Joachim research. We could observe that Joachim's psychological music yielded in *Abendglocken* a somber portrait of his emotions, clarifying what he meant by "detecting" and "saving" his emotions "from the abyss." But if we inquire further about what sparked Joachim's emotions, we could argue that Joachim's psychological music was ultimately based not so much on Ritter's concepts as on Joachim's adaptations of these concepts, which render Ritter's "Fatalismus" as Joachim's "Fatalismus of Gisela" or at least, in *Abendglocken*, as a fatalism of Gis-e-[l]a.



## 2. Joachim's Overture to *Hamlet* Op. 4 (1853): Between *Vergangenheitsmusik* and *Zukunftsmusik*

*"As I went on reading, it seemed as if the scene became more and more illuminated and Ophelia and Hamlet stepped bodily forward."* –Robert Schumann<sup>1</sup>

Understanding Joachim's aesthetic as a composer of program music in the early 1850s has challenged scholars thus far.<sup>2</sup> The many dichotomies that his life and work revealed in the 1850s have often blurred the contours of Joachim the composer by defining him *through* dichotomies. History has situated him as a composer between Leipzig (Moritz Hauptmann) and Weimar (Liszt), as well as between absolute music (Brahms) and program music (Liszt). There are other relevant dichotomies – his two musical *personae* as violinist and composer, as well as his conflicts between German and Hungarian nationalities, and between Jewish and Christian faiths (he converted to the

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<sup>1</sup> "Es war mir beim Lesen, als erhellte sich von Seite zu Seite die Szene, und Ophelia und Hamlet träten in leibhafter Gestalt hervor." *Joachim Briefe*, I:60, letter from Robert Schumann to Joachim of June 8, 1853.

<sup>2</sup> Borchard, Eshbach, and Gerhard Winkler have recently examined Joachim as a composer in the early 1850s in Weimar. See Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*; Eshbach's biography on Joachim ([www.josephjoachim.com](http://www.josephjoachim.com)) and his published article provide insight on Joachim's youth and examine his Jewishness, see Eshbach, "Joachim's Youth – Joachim's Jewishness," 548 ff. Winkler published the only existing, though not extensive, study of Joachim's *Hamlet* Overture, in which he investigates the work's motivic transformation. See Gerhard Winkler, "Schauspielmusik – Konzertouvertüre – Tondichtung: Joseph Joachim im Weimarer Gegenlicht," in *Anklaenge 2008 Joseph Joachim (1831-1907): Europäischer Bürger, Komponist, Virtuose*, ed. Michele Calella and Christian Glanz (Wien: Mille Tre, 2008), 95.

latter in 1856). Borchard has offered a valuable start to understanding his

“Zerrissenheit”<sup>3</sup> – disunity – by explaining:

If one follows in the letters to Gisela von Arnim Joachim’s sketched self portrait, he saw himself in contrast to Brahms as a disjointed man: in conflict with his family, in conflict between material security and artistic claims, between concessions to the public taste and the requirements of “pure” art, for which he stood as an interpreter, but for which he did not feel suited as a composer. This inner turmoil was mirrored on other levels, for example in the conflict between his Jewish origin and social assimilation or between his first and second homeland, Hungary and Germany. *Disunity* [my italics] was a typical theme of *Weltschmerz* around 1850: an entire generation saw itself in molds such as Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> I use the term “Zerrissenheit” as a concept of a widespread, and not singular, cultural phenomenon; Sengle succinctly defined this term in *Die Biedermeierzeit: Deutsche Literatur im Spannungsfeld zwischen Restauration und Revolution 1815-1848*, I:225: “Goethe, the latest, has made *Weltschmerz* an expression; Jean Paul, the original creator of the word, gave it its name. [...] What is meant is always that suffering, ‘Zerrissenheit’ denotes not only the individual sufferer or one in turmoil [. . .], but rather must be recognized as a metaphysical phenomenon.” (“Den *Weltschmerz* hat spätestens Goethe zum Ausdruck gebracht, Jean Paul, der originale Wortschöpfer, beim Namen genannt. [...] Gemeint ist immer, daß das Leiden, die Zerrissenheit nicht nur den einzelnen Leidenden oder Zerrissenen zeichnet [...], und daher als metaphysisches Phänomen anerkannt werden muß.”)

<sup>4</sup> “Folgt man dem in den Briefen an Gisela von Arnim entworfenen Selbstbildnis Joachims, sah er sich im Gegensatz zu Brahms als einen zerrissenen Menschen: Im Konflikt mit der Familie, im Konflikt zwischen materieller Absicherung und künstlerischem Anspruch, zwischen Konzessionen an den Publikumsgeschmack und den Forderungen ‘reiner’ Kunst, für die er als Interpret einstand, denen er sich jedoch als Komponist nicht gewachsen fühlte. Diese Zerrissenheit spiegelt sich auch auf anderen Ebenen, so zum Beispiel im Konflikt zwischen einem Bekenntnis zu seiner jüdischen Herkunft und gesellschaftlichem Anpassungsdruck oder aber zwischen erster und zweiter Heimat, Ungarn und Deutschland. *Zerrissenheit* [my italics] war ein typisches *Weltschmerz*thema um 1850: Eine ganze Generation spiegelte sich in Gestalten wie Shakespeares *Hamlet*.” Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 128, see also Sengle, *Die Biedermeierzeit*, I:102-145.

This chapter will follow Borchard's method and investigate Joachim's *Hamlet* Overture (1853) by asking how Shakespeare's tragedy served as a mirror to a whole generation. Thereby it provides, for this dissertation, a window into Joachim's political-historical *Weltansicht*. What was the cultural situation that elevated the topos of *Weltschmerz* and how, specifically, was cultural-societal disunity an issue for Joachim? The analysis of Joachim's *Hamlet* approaches his disunity from a musical perspective – by positioning the work between a musical past and present, by acknowledging its programmatic and counter-Lisztian features, and by questioning how Joachim portrays the character Hamlet.

Against common expectation, Joachim closely followed the political events of the 1848-49 revolutions, especially in Hungary. Letters between March and October 1848 mirror the enthusiasm and hope of revolutionary Kossuth's success for a Hungarian independence and the subsequent frustration when the dream for independence was shattered.<sup>5</sup> But Joachim lived in Leipzig at the time and was likely also informed about the multifarious German revolutionary activities. Surely he was one among the many advocates for a German unification.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe* I:11-12, letter from Joachim to his brother Heinrich of March 27, 1848.

<sup>6</sup> "May Germany step boldly forward on the freer path and become a united nation soon, which can prove to be able to maintain the place it is justified to inhabit." ("Möge Deutschland rüstig

The same political climate that produced German *Zerrissenheit* and *Weltschmerz* – the background of contemporary discussions of *Hamlet* – also produced Joachim's overture. His turn to Shakespeare's play, his correspondence, and lastly the music itself all serve as a mirror, in which we can recognize his *Zerrissenheit* as a composer and furthermore unique stylistic features, which allow a definition of Joachim as an artist and composer beyond the common categorization of his music as lying "between *a* and *b*", where *a* can stand for Liszt and *b* for Mendelssohn, Schumann, or Brahms. By acknowledging important influences from earlier and contemporary composers, we can reveal Joachim in the context of the political and cultural climate of his time.

In 1838, during Schumann's tenure as the editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and a decade or so before Joachim composed his overture, an article discussing the unsuitability of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for music-dramatic adaptation (hereinafter referred to as the "unmusicality" of *Hamlet*) appeared in seven installments. It took the form of conversations between musical and literary critics attempting to analyze just why *Hamlet* resists any generally musical, and specifically operatic, treatments. The

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auf der freieren Bahn fortschreiten und bald ein einiger Staat werden, der den Platz, den er einzunehmen berechtigt ist, behaupten kann!") Ibid, 12.

reason, they concluded, centered on the play's nature as "a tragedy of pure reflection"<sup>7</sup> and on the title character Hamlet, "ein Held der Reflexion" ("a hero of reflection"), a designation that recalled a comment of A. W. Schlegel.<sup>8</sup> The "incessant, never satisfied brooding" ("anhaltendes, und nie befriedigendes Nachsinnen"), a key theme of the *Gedankentrauerspiel*,<sup>9</sup> as Schlegel called it, was, according to these critics, incongruent with musical needs, prompting comments as: "someone should just once try to compose such passivity of doing nothing!" ("solche Passivität des Nichtsthuns komponiere mal einer!")<sup>10</sup> Further problems of *Hamlet* were identified: to depict musically Ophelia's madness, an endeavor that had failed in recent, "shallow" Italian attempts, was difficult; the critics also questioned how a composer could possibly render musically the finely nuanced bitterness of Hamlet's character, ranging from "lustig-bitter" to "giftig-bitter" and "schmerzlich-bitter" ("passionate/bitter, poisonous/bitter, painful/bitter").<sup>11</sup> In summary, "Prince Amleth" was deemed an "absolute musikalische Nulligkeit"

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<sup>7</sup> Carl Seidel, "Hamlet in der Oper: Musikalisch-ästhetische Gespräche," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 9, No. 48 (November 27, 1838 to December 28, 1838).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., No. 46.

<sup>9</sup> A. W. Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur* [sic], in *August Wilhelm von Schlegels Sämmtliche Werke* (Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1846), VI:247.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

("absolute musical nullity")<sup>12</sup>; accordingly, any attempt to base a music-dramatic piece on *Hamlet* would be doomed to failure, would share nothing more than its name with Shakespeare's play, and indeed, would be a sin against Shakespeare.<sup>13</sup>

Although the 1838 article addressed operatic composition (hence the title "Hamlet in der Oper"), *Hamlet's* "unmusicality" seems not to have applied to all music genres. Hector Berlioz offered one exception in the early 1840s with his work for chorus and piano, entitled "La mort d'Ophélie," published in 1848 as *Tristia* No. 2. In 1851 Berlioz revised and republished the work for chorus and orchestra<sup>14</sup> with an added, newly composed Hamlet number, "Marche funèbre pour la dernière scène d'Hamlet,"<sup>15</sup> about which Joachim may have corresponded with Berlioz in 1852.<sup>16</sup> Next to Berlioz's

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> "[...] die Sünde einer solchen Travestierung, denn eine solche bleibt es doch." ("...the sin of such a travesty, for such it would remain.") Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Published as *Tristia* version II in 1851 by Richault. See D. Kern Holoman, *Berlioz* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 607.

<sup>15</sup> Hugh Macdonald, "Berlioz, Hector," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51424> (accessed April 18, 2013).

<sup>16</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:30, letter to Liszt of May 22, 1852: "I have had no opportunity of either testing myself with the orchestra in front of a large audience, or of fulfilling wishes of a higher kind, such as, for instance, getting to know and understand Berlioz more intimately" (translation by Nora Bickley, *Letters from and to Joseph Joachim* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914), 12).

*Tristia* and to two early operas on *Hamlet*,<sup>17</sup> only two overtures for the play exist prior to 1852, one in C minor (1778-79) by Georg Joseph Vogler (1749-1814), the teacher of C. M. von Weber, and one by Hermann Hirschbach (1839).<sup>18</sup> In fact, even in the late 1850s Wagner reportedly claimed: “Musicians should not concern themselves with things that have nothing to do with them. *Hamlet* offers nothing to musicians.”<sup>19</sup> As we will see, *Hamlet* did offer something to Joseph Joachim, who resorted to this very play in 1852 to inspire his overture to *Hamlet* (1853).

*Hamlet* was a very popular Shakespeare play in Germany – if not the most popular, – especially after the appearance of Schlegel/Tieck’s translation earlier in the

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<sup>17</sup> Francesco Gasparini, Opera *Ambeto* (1706/rev.1711), original libretto by A. Della Corte. See Dennis Libby and Angela Lepore, “Gasparini,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43225pg1> (accessed March 20, 2013); Saverio Mercadante, *Amleto* (melodramma tragico), Milan, Scala, December 26, 1822. Michael Wittmann, “Mercadante, Saverio,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18426> (accessed March 20, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> Margaret Grave, “Vogler, Georg Joseph,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29608> (accessed April 9, 2013). For Hermann Hirschbach, see Robert Passenlehner, *Hermann Hirschbach – der Kritiker und Künstler* (Bremen: Outlookverlagsgesellschaft, 2012).

<sup>19</sup> Cosima Wagner, *Diaries*, 2 vols, ed. Martin Gregor-Dellin and Dietrich Mack, trans. Geoffrey Skelton Collins (St. James’s Place: London, 1980), entry of May 1, 1879.

century.<sup>20</sup> The rarity of musical treatments is curious enough and surely related to Schlegel's classification of the play as a *Gedankentrauerspiel*. This play, indeed, relies more heavily on the character's interior space – his thoughts and reflections – than on exterior action.<sup>21</sup> As scholars have summarized: "[*Hamlet* is a drama] in which the spectator at times is captivated more by the hero's debates with himself than with external events."<sup>22</sup>

Schlegel's account of *Hamlet*, put forth in his *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur* [sic],<sup>23</sup> builds, in fact, on another influential figure, who contributed substantially to interpreting *Hamlet* in the first half of the nineteenth century: Goethe.

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<sup>20</sup> Schlegel translated seventeen Shakespeare plays between 1797 and 1810, which were later (1825-1833) complemented by Ludwig and Dorothea Tieck and Wolf G. v. Baudissin. See Johannes John, "Schlegel, August Wilhelm von," in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 23 (2007), <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118607960.html>.

<sup>21</sup> "*Hamlet* is one of a kind: a tragedy of thought, through incessant and never satisfied brooding about human destiny, about the gloomy confusion of world realities, and certainly attempting to invoke in the audience this brooding." ("*Hamlet* ist einzig in seiner Art: ein Gedanken-Trauerspiel, durch anhaltendes und nie befriedigtes Nachsinnen über die menschlichen Schicksale, über die düstere Verworrenheit der Weltbegebenheiten eingegeben, und bestimmt, eben dieses Nachsinnen wieder in den Zuschauern hervorzurufen.") Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur*, I-II:247.

<sup>22</sup> Ute Schläfer, "Die späten Tragödien," in *Shakespeare Handbuch*, ed. Ina Schabert (Stuttgart: Alfred Körner, 1972), 551. "[*Hamlet* ist ein Drama], bei dem der Zuschauer zuzeiten mehr von der Auseinandersetzung des Helden mit sich selbst, als vom äußeren Vorgang gefangengenommen wird."

<sup>23</sup> A. W. Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur*, 247.



His views about *Hamlet* helped establish the play's popularity in Germany, and they were actively discussed and debated. In Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795/96) the essential *Hamlet* problem is revealed in the context of staging the play. The main character, Wilhelm, explains the Hamlet problem through the idealized lens of Weimar classicism, asserting that "a great deed [is] laid upon a soul, who is not up to the deed [. . .] A beautiful, pure, noble, highly moral being without the sensual strength that makes heroes, collapses under the burden, which it is neither able to carry nor to release; every task is sacred to it but this one too heavy. The impossible is demanded of him [of this being], not the impossible in itself, but that, which is impossible to it."<sup>24</sup> Goethe's role in popularizing *Hamlet* in Germany, and the paucity of musical adaptations would suggest that Joachim's turn to Shakespeare in 1852-53 was born of a literary-cultural inspiration.

However, it is also likely that Schumann had a role in motivating Joachim to take up *Hamlet*; as editor of the *NZfM*, Schumann was familiar with the article on "Hamlet in der Oper." In fact, as a twenty-year-old, Schumann himself had composed some *Hamlet*

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<sup>24</sup> "Eine große Tat auf eine Seele gelegt, die der Tat nicht gewachsen ist. [...] Ein schönes, reines, edles, höchst moralisches Wesen ohne die sinnliche Stärke, die den Helden macht, geht unter einer Last zugrunde, die es weder tragen noch abwerfen kann; jede Pflicht ist ihm heilig, diese zu schwer. Das Unmögliche wird von ihm gefordert, nicht das Unmögliche an sich, sondern das, was ihm unmöglich ist." J. W. Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Hamburger Ausgabe (Hamburg: Wegner, 1948-1960), VII:246.

fragments<sup>25</sup> and was, as his *Julius Cäsar* overture reveals, fascinated by Shakespeare, who was purportedly as important to him as Jean Paul.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Schumann corresponded with Hermann Hirschbach about the latter's *Hamlet* Overture in 1839.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Clara Schumann, ed., *Jugendbriefe von Robert Schumann. Nach den Originalen mitgeteilt von Clara Schumann* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1885), 133: letter to his mother: "So then: concerning the great opera, it's true; I am full of fire and flame and rage the entire day in sweet, fabulous tones. The opera is called: Hamlet; thoughts of fame and immortality give me power and fantasy." ("Sodann: mit der großen Oper hat es seine Richtigkeit; ich bin ganz Feuer und Flamme und wüthe den ganzen Tag in süßen fabelhaften Tönen. Die Oper heißt: 'Hamlet' der Gedanke an Ruhm und Unsterblichkeit gibt mir Kraft und Phantasie.") The fragment is mentioned in Margit McCorkle, *Robert Schumann. Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (Mainz: Schott, 2003), 652: unter Anhang A2, three fragmented sketches (1830-32?) to an overture or symphony in E-flat: "Hamlet-Sinfonia." Also see Fabian Bergener, *Die Ouvertüren Robert Schumanns* (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York: Georg Olms, 2011), 107. That Schumann made a connection between the Hamlet figure and the anti-aristocratic recluse Beethoven is also enlightening for this discussion as we explore Joachim's stylistic orientation to Beethoven through Hamlet: "Soon after entered the young Beethoven, breathless, embarrassed, and disturbed, with disheveled hair hanging down, his chest and forehead free as Hamlet, and one is very amazed at the eccentric; but in the ballroom it was too narrow for him, and he rather bolted out into the darkness through thick and thin, and snorted against manners and ceremony, and went around the flower, so as not to crush it." ("Bald darauf tritt der junge Beethoven herein, atemlos, verlegen und verstört, mit unordentlich herumhängenden Haaren, Brust und Stirn frei wie Hamlet, und man verwundert sich sehr über den Sonderling; aber im Ballsaal war es ihm zu eng und langweilig, und er stürzte lieber ins Dunkle hinaus durch dick und dünn und schnob gegen Mode und das Zeremoniell und ging dabei der Blume aus dem Weg, um sie nicht zu zertreten.") See Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften*, I:107. Cited in Berenike Schröder, *Monumentale Erinnerung – ästhetische Erneuerung. Beethovenrezeption und die Ästhetik der Intermedialität in den Schriften der Neudeutschen Schule* (Göttingen: V & R Unipress, 2012), 61.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Jost, "Ouvertüren," in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Taddey (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2006), 362.

<sup>27</sup> Passenlehner, *Hermann Hirschbach – der Kritiker und Künstler*, 29.

Schumann would have known Joachim since 1843,<sup>28</sup> and the two were in close contact from 1853 on. In the early 1850s, however, there is no documented exchange between them; still, Joachim's letters to Ferdinand David show great interest in the elder's compositional activities.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps Joachim's admiration led to a familiarity with earlier *NZfM* issues, such as those of 1838.

Notwithstanding, Joachim's key role in treating *Hamlet* musically is noteworthy, to say the least, and contradicts the customary view that Liszt's much better-known symphonic poem *Hamlet* (1858) was the first major essay, which was followed later in the century and in the next by an overture by Nils Gade (1861), an opera by Ambroise Thomas (1868), a *Fantasy* overture by Tchaikovsky (1888), incidental music and a film score by Shostakovich (1931 and 1963), and an opera by Humphrey Searle (1968).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim met for the first time on August 19, 1843 at the occasion of Joseph Joachim's debut at an *Abonnementkonzert* in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, where Mendelssohn accompanied him on the piano; the latter also performed Robert's *Variations* for two pianos with Clara. In the dress rehearsal for this concert the twelve-year old Joachim presumably "got to know Schumann," who was amazed by the young boy. See Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:55. Another early encounter between the Schumanns and Joachim occurred in autumn 1845, when Robert asked Joachim to step in for Clara who was scheduled, but unable, to perform at the *Abonnementkonzert* in Dresden. Joachim played Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, see Robert Schumann, *Briefe, Neue Folge*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1904), 253.

<sup>29</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:5, letter to Ferdinand David of April 12, 1847: Joachim asks David if Schumann's trip was successful – on the occasion of the performance of Schumann's *Paradies und die Peri* in Berlin.

The little-known *Hamlet* Overture of Joachim (1853) is only one of several overtures he wrote in the early 1850s, and it has not received much attention on its own merits. Joachim began working on this overture during his tenure as concertmaster at the Weimar court theatre where Liszt had been Kapellmeister since 1848, and his musical interaction as well as correspondence with Liszt reveal an intense involvement between 1850 and 1853, when Joachim likely encountered Liszt's music in a serious way.

Comparing Joachim's *Hamlet* with Liszt's symphonic poem *Hamlet* allows us to explore the nature of the cross-influences between the two composers. While the time and style of each composition suggest a great gap – one suggests *Vergangenheits*, the other *Zukunftsmusik* – differences are notable in form, specificity of program, and use of harmony. There are some similarities, which have to do with the shared subject matter, and how both composers confronted the “unmusical” nature of the play, including some issues raised in the 1838 article. Among them are: how the two composers interpreted musically Hamlet's passivity, indecision, and the issue of “Reflexion” (raised by Schlegel), and how they understood the hero's lack of “sinnliche Stärke” (“sensuous power”) insinuated by Goethe. As secondary issues we shall also compare their

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<sup>30</sup> “Hamlet,” in *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e7750> (accessed April 10, 2013).

solutions for representing Ophelia's madness more convincingly and in a less "shallow" way than earlier Italian operatic attempts, and examine how at least one of the two composers responded musically to the "Bitter-Nuancen."<sup>31</sup> Above all, the overture and the symphonic poem reveal Joachim's awareness of contemporary Shakespeare reception and how it reflected the German cultural climate – like a snapshot of the 1850s – and attempts to come to terms with a starkly split nation, riven in more than one way by an abyss between the old and new.

This chapter examines how Joachim's and Liszt's works found their ways between old and new – musically and programmatically – and how their understanding of Shakespeare revealed similar tendencies – moving beyond and away from Goethe's older views and the "Reflexion" issues toward a new aesthetic, strongly colored by the cultural and political atmosphere of the years following the 1848 revolution. It was a period when politically, it seemed, German realms sympathized with Hamlet's famous indecision, expressed in his line "To be or not to be."

Before proceeding, we should clarify Joachim's and Liszt's fascination for "revitalizing" music through literature, or put another way, how they understood program music. Although much debated at the time, the musical portrayal of literary characters or plots, based on the intertwining of text and music, did not signify a one-to-

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<sup>31</sup> Seidel, "Hamlet in der Oper: Musikalisch-ästhetische Gespräche."

one correspondence between the two. Indeed, as Carl Dahlhaus explains, “The opinion that Liszt translated poems into music, that is, that he attempted to express the original text in a different language, is misleading.”<sup>32</sup> Neither Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* nor his characters are “the content” of Liszt’s and Joachim’s works “but merely their subject. And a subject is not a model, which is imitated, but material, which the composer processes.”<sup>33</sup> Kenneth Hamilton offered this fitting formulation summing up the programmatic approach: through the “alliance of literature and the visual arts [...] music would be revitalized by the inspiring force of some sister work of art: a play, poem or painting.”<sup>34</sup>

The approach to program music, especially for Liszt, was frequently viewed in a derogatory sense, igniting genuine misunderstanding. Critics have been keen to stress the separation between music and text, although text – in many guises and functions –

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<sup>32</sup> “Die Vorstellung Liszt habe Dichtungen in Musik übersetzt, also in einer anderen Sprache dasselbe zu sagen versucht wie der Originaltext, ist ein Irrtum [...]. Goethe’s *Faust* ist jedoch nicht der Inhalt der Faust-Symphony von Liszt, sondern deren bloßes Sujet. Und ein Sujet ist kein Vorbild, das nachgeahmt wird, sondern ein Stoff, den der Komponist verarbeitet.” Carl Dahlhaus, *Allgemeine Theorie der Musik*, 10 vols., ed. Hermann Danuser (Laaber: Laaber, 2000), I:498.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Kenneth Hamilton, “Liszt,” in *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 143.

had been for centuries a natural part of music.<sup>35</sup> The polemic-laden critical reception of Liszt's works raised complex issues during the so-called "war of the romantics," the aesthetic debate between Liszt and his program music, and Brahms (and Hanslick) and their idea of "absolute music"<sup>36</sup> of the later 1850s, which reached its zenith in the manifesto of 1860, an open declaration formulated and signed by members of the conservative party, and an official "declaration of war." Without going further into this debate, Joachim's and Liszt's *Hamlet* can be said neither exactly to "represent" nor "paint" the underlying program. As Dahlhaus pointedly asserted: "The poetic idea results from the interweaving and the interplay between sound and program."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Dahlhaus, ". . . in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the term absolute music was as foreign as the idea to which it pointed. Historically the 'extra musical' is not an addition to absolute music, but on the contrary absolute music is an abstraction or form of reduction of types of instrumental music that had always encompassed 'extramusical' moments, which were not yet viewed as 'extra musical.'" (" . . . dem 18. und dem frühen 19. Jahrhundert war der Terminus absolute Musik ebenso fremd wie die Idee, auf die er zielt. Geschichtlich ist nicht etwa das 'Außermusikalische' ein Zusatz zur absoluten Musik, sondern umgekehrt die absolute Musik eine Abstraktions- oder Reduktionsform von Typen der Instrumentalmusik, die schon immer 'außermusikalische' Momente – die noch nicht als 'außermusikalisch' galten – einschlossen,") see Carl Dahlhaus, "Thesen über Programmusik," in *Beiträge zur musikalischen Hermeneutik*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse, 1975), 193.

<sup>36</sup> Eduard Hanslick put forward a paradigmatic study describing and defending the merits of "absolute music" ("absolute Musik") in Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (Darmstadt, 1965, reprint from 1854).

<sup>37</sup> "In der Programmusik Lisztscher Prägung [resultiert] die 'poetische Idee,' der Sinn des Werkes aus dem Ineinandergreifen und der Wechselwirkung zwischen tönendem Phänomen und Programm." Dahlhaus, "Thesen über Programmusik," 196.

## **2.1 Joachim's Overture to Hamlet: Toward a Programmatic Sonata Form**

Joachim's works of the early Weimar years up to 1853 show a fascinating dichotomy as the young Leipzig-trained composer exposed himself to the progressive musical influences of his new environment. In particular the overtures, while revealing an adherence to sonata form, also betray that he was curious to experiment with new ideas and to allow his style to be exposed to Lisztian ideas. Immediately preceding his Overture to *Hamlet*, Joachim composed a violin concerto in 1851, titled *Violinkonzert in einem Satz* Op. 3, and dedicated to Liszt. In this first extensive orchestral work of the Weimar period, Joachim endeavored to explore new ground. As the title suggests – a concerto in one movement – Joachim actually worked with a truly Lisztian formal idea, the double-function form, in which two formal models are overlaid to form a continuous whole – the three movements of the concerto and the three traditional sections of sonata form.<sup>38</sup> Although this immersion in the Lisztian aesthetic was an exception in Joachim's oeuvre, his next work, the Overture to *Hamlet*, explored yet another approach – a hybrid between the Leipzig and Weimar poles of his compositional exposure.

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<sup>38</sup> Liszt's Sonata in B minor, in "double-function" form (1853) may have been on Joachim's mind.



The germination of the Overture to *Hamlet*, unlike Joachim's other four overtures of the 1850s, is distinctly associated with Liszt<sup>39</sup> and also is related to Joachim's particular understanding of Shakespeare. In formulating his approach to programmatic music, Joachim relied on an idiosyncratic use and manipulation of sonata form and motives, which betray, albeit quite differently from Liszt's programmaticism, a clear interpretation, as we shall now see, of one of the central issues of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "Reflexion" ("reflection").

The choice of the tragic key of D minor as the principal key for Joachim's sonata-form movement is rather telling when we consider that no significant overture in D minor could have stood as a model. On the other hand, Joachim was intimately familiar with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and, as shall become apparent, in the analysis, he was also likely familiar with two other D-minor works – at least one version of Liszt's

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<sup>39</sup> "May [this work, *Hamlet*] make clear to you what I trust you have never doubted, that I have had you, my master, constantly in my mind. Your farewell words, which you called out to me when in the midst of friends on that last evening at Weimar, still ring in my ears; they re-echo in my heart like music, which will never die. I have had ample leisure here to listen to this *voix interne*." ("Das Werk möge Ihnen auch sagen, woran Sie hoffentlich nicht gezweifelt haben, daß Sie, mein Meister, mir beständig gegenwärtig waren. Die Abschiedsworte, welche Sie mir unter Freunden an einem der letzten Abende in Weimar zugerufen hatten, sind mir noch in den Ohren; sie hallen in meinem Innern als Musik wieder, die nie verklingen kann. Dieser 'voix interne' zuzuhorchen, hatte ich hier alle Muße.") *Joachim Briefe*, I:44, letter from Joachim to Franz Liszt of March 21, 1853.

*Mazeppa*<sup>40</sup> and Schumann's Symphony No. 4, Op. 120. It is unlikely that Joachim knew either Brahms's early versions of the first Piano Concerto in D Minor Op. 15 (which also evokes the Ninth Symphony and was at an earlier stage conceived as a two-piano sonata<sup>41</sup>), or Schumann's Violin Concerto in D Minor (1853). Joachim's *Hamlet* was finished already in January 1853,<sup>42</sup> premiered in May, whereas he met Brahms for the first time in April 1853, during the latter's visit to Weimar together with Remenyi, thus calling into doubt the question of an influence.<sup>43</sup> But an earlier piece from the Baroque in the key of D minor was certainly on his mind – the Chaconne of J. S. Bach, a dark, even tragic, movement, and one of the violinist Joachim's "warhorses." He performed it, among many other occasions, at the famous Karlsruhe Festival, held by composers of the New German school in October 1853.<sup>44</sup> Joachim may have found another significant precedent in Beethoven's *Ghost* Trio, of which the movement evoking the "ghost" is the second – in D minor, which elicited this response from Carl Czerny in 1842: "[It]

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<sup>40</sup> Kenneth Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 121.

<sup>41</sup> David Brodbeck, *Brahms, Symphony No. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3-5. For this work Joachim later, allegedly, assisted Brahms with orchestration.

<sup>42</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, supplemental repertoire list.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

resembles an appearance from the underworld. One could think not inappropriately of the first appearance of the ghost in ‘Hamlet’.”<sup>45</sup>

The first, most notable feature of Joachim’s use of sonata form is the juxtaposition of slow and fast formal sections. The tempo of the slow introduction, *Moderato (assai)*, alternates in the course of the work with faster sections of *Allegro assai* or *Allegro agitato*, as indicated in the following diagram.

Measure	Tempo	Sonata Form
1-37	<i>Moderato assai</i>	Slow introduction
38-89	<i>Allegro agitato</i>	Exposition
90-98	<i>Moderato</i>	
99-102	<i>Allegro agitato</i>	
103-106	<i>Moderato</i>	
107-192	<i>Allegro agitato</i>	
193-239	<i>Moderato</i>	Development
240-400	<i>Allegro agitato</i>	Development/Recapitulation
401-461	<i>Presto</i>	Coda
462-481	<i>Moderato</i>	

**Figure 1, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Alternating Tempos**

This constant slow-fast motion is especially unusual because it continues beyond the exposition into the development – which brings back the slow introduction of the opening – and also into the recapitulation, which revives the tempo *Moderato*. It is as if

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<sup>45</sup> Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven’s Works for the Piano* (Vienna, 1842), 87. Cited in William Kinderman, *Beethoven* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 134.

Joachim bends sonata form in order to express temporally the ambivalence of Hamlet's "To be or not to be."

Where might Joachim have found a formal precedent? Such continuous tempo fluctuation, going hand in hand with time signatures alternating between 3/2 and 4/4, does not appear in Beethoven's *Egmont* and *Coriolan* Overtures, which in other respects, as we shall examine below, do seem to have influenced Joachim considerably, though other works of Beethoven, such as the first movement of the Piano Sonata Op. 109 come to mind. However, Schumann's *Ouvertüre zu Shakespeares Julius Cäsar*, Op. 128, another Shakespeare adaptation, might also have served as a model. This work does show a similar temporal treatment although not quite as extreme. As Peter Jost points out,<sup>46</sup> Schumann's development brings back the slow introduction (mm. 75-114), which creates a "separation from sonata form that is full of tension" ("spannungsvolle Distanz zur Sonatensatzform").<sup>47</sup>

In Jost's view, this return of the slow introduction yields certain insights about the exposition, which the listener obtains retrospectively. When the development begins,

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<sup>46</sup> Jost, "Ouvertüren," 372.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 372; Michael Struck, "Am Rande der 'großen Form' – Schumanns Ouvertüren und ihr Verhältnis zur Symphonie (mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der *Ouvertüre zu Shakespeares Julius Cäsar* op. 128)," in *Probleme der Symphonischen Tradition im 19. Jahrhundert* (Internationales Musikwissenschaftliches Colloquium Bonn 1989 – Kongreßbericht), ed. Siegfried Kross and Marie Luise Maintz (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1990), 252.

the listener realizes that, in fact, the very opening – the slow introduction – was already a quasi exposition and not merely a preface without formal consequences for the “working-out” process of the form.<sup>48</sup> A similar case obtains in Joachim’s overture, in which the “real” exposition, at m. 38, already discloses development-like traits, in other words, a non-periodic openness, related to the “transitional” nature of the primary theme (mm. 37), discussed below. This formal anomaly makes sense only in retrospect when we reach the development.

Joachim’s fluctuating tempos can be seen as referring to Hamlet’s character and suggesting, to some degree, a freeing of sonata form from the “textbooks of A. B. Marx,”<sup>49</sup> and perhaps even evoking subtle hints about what Wagner detected in Liszt’s symphonic poems: “There is present no first Allegro, no Scherzo, Andante and Rondo in the classical form of the symphony elucidated by Marx, but rather an Allegro interrupted by an [ . . . ] Adagio.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> In support of this observation, Joachim does not formally separate the introduction from the main *Allegro* (an earlier precedent, might have inspired him is Beethoven’s *Les Adieux* Op. 81a).

<sup>49</sup> *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 45, No. 22 (November 21, 1856): 225.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 225. “Da ist kein erstes Allegro, kein Scherzo, Andante und Rondo in der von Marx gelehrtten classischen Form der Symphonie vorhanden, sondern bald ein Allegro, unterbrochen von einem [...] Adagio.”

The first system of the musical score is written in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G2, a half note F2, and a quarter note E2. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed below the first measure. The second measure contains a quarter note D2, a half note C2, and a quarter note B1. A dynamic marking of *cresc.* (crescendo) is placed below the second measure. The third measure contains a quarter note A1, a half note G1, and a quarter note F1. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed below the third measure. The system ends with a fermata over the final note.

Neapolitan chord functions as a trope, which Joachim may have applied as a trope for Hamlet's sadness, grief, as well as the uncanny; it remains one of the most prominent sonorities in the overture. After 37 measures Joachim reaches what seems to be the beginning of the exposition, featuring a principal theme in D minor (Ex. 16, first part of the motive) and a secondary theme in F major. The principal theme's first appearance, on b-flat, or E-flat minor, the zenith of an arch-formed phrase shaped by dynamics and contour (Ex. 16), again reveals the Neapolitan as key signature of Hamlet.



<sup>51</sup> Perhaps it is no coincidence that also Beethoven's *Ghost* Trio Op. 70 No. 1, whose second movement Czerny compared to the ghost in Hamlet (fn. 45), also uses the Neapolitan chord.

That the exposition has actually begun already in m. 1 (instead of m. 37, as we were led to believe) with the four-note motive becomes apparent only when we reach the development's return of the slow introduction, which betrays itself as "expositional" material worthy of development.



**Example 17, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, Secondary Theme in F Major (mm. 115 ff.)**

After the lovely melodious secondary theme (Ex. 17) the harmonic course of the exposition turns, at the last moment, to a pessimistic F minor, ending the exposition in this dark key instead of the expected continuation of the mediant F major, the key of the secondary theme. This accounts for one manipulation of Joachim's sonata form.

The development confronts us with rather forceful dramatic action, not only in the form of juxtaposed sections in different tempos, but also in other, strongly suggestive cues, realized as several interruptions, which we can interpret with the assistance of Theodor Adorno. Such formal incisions are by no means unique to Joachim; they have a strong precedent in the "Beethovenian development of the symphonic type," as Adorno relates, who points us to a telling analogy of these interruptions to tragedy (Adorno evokes what Hölderlin called the "calculable law" of tragedy). The musical symbol, by which the law of tragedy unfolds, according to

Adorno, is the interruption, or caesura – a Beethovenian staple.<sup>52</sup> Adorno describes the Beethovenian development, in light of this dramatic principle, as follows: “It [the development] begins with what in the eighteenth century was called the *fausse reprise*, a recapitulation of the beginning [...], [which is] followed, after an initial rise, by a descending segment of the curve, customarily associated with a certain dissolution.”<sup>53</sup>

In Joachim’s development the “curve” of musical action is strongly affected, after only a few measures, by three major “dissolving” gestures in the form of three truncations that momentarily arrest the flow of the music. These truncations, significantly, are independent of the temporal fluctuations between *Moderato* and *Allegro* and operate on yet another level to emphasize, through a striking manipulation of time, Hamlet’s line “To be or not to be.” Only eight measures into the development the music comes to a halt (Ex. 18) with just two horns and timpani remaining on a *ppp* pedal on *f*.

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<sup>52</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 64.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*



Example 18, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, first “Dissolving” Gesture  
(mm. 193-201)

The principal theme leads to the next halt in the development (Ex. 20). However, before dissolving, it is weakened and de-energized: the originally ascending, energetic staccato theme becomes here a falling legato line (Ex. 19, mm. 212-213 and 226-227):

Example 19, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, Principal Theme De-energized  
(mm. 210-214)

Lacking the energy to move forward, this theme comes to a complete halt in m. 270 (Ex. 20), the second of three major gestures of “dissolution” in the development:

Example 20, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, Second “Dissolving” Gesture  
(mm. 266-271)

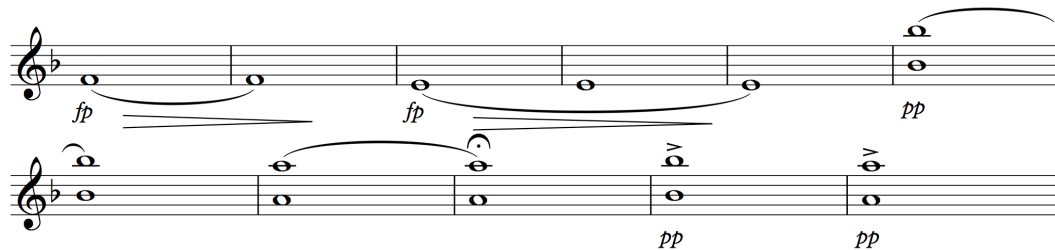
The third moment of “dissolution” occurs towards the end of the development, two measures before the recapitulation (Ex. 21). Whereas the second truncation featured the primary theme’s stumbling, the third involves the secondary theme. Immediately preceding this point, the secondary theme has been presented as a “false” recapitulation at mm. 288, in the key of D major, which must be considered the “wrong” key, given the expectation of the tragic turn of the secondary theme to the parallel tonic, D minor.

The musical score for Example 21, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, False Secondary Theme, Recapitulation (mm. 288-309) is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 288-291) is in D major and marked *mf*. The second system (mm. 292-295) is marked *Poco riten.* and *pp sempre*. The third system (mm. 296-300) is marked *a tempo* and *pp* for the first two measures, followed by *fp* for the last two measures. The key signature changes to D minor in the final measures.

**Example 21, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture*, False Secondary Theme, Recapitulation (mm. 288-309)**

The last two chords of the secondary theme (f-sharp and e, whole notes, second and third measure, third system of Ex. 21) are cut off, and Joachim broadens the a-d-e-g ascent into whole notes before turning to a shocking *fp* B-flat minor chord, a stark

contrast to the previous D major. And the pedal on a, which has been in our ear for much of the presentation of the theme, turns into a chromatic descent in the sixth measure, suggesting the theme's literal cessation. Indeed, shortly thereafter it dissolves, expressed through whole notes, fermatas in *pp*, and a dramatically reduced texture, leaving only flute, clarinet, and horn playing with *gestopfte Töne* ("muted sounds"). No valid recapitulation has yet been offered, which makes this passage a striking tragic point (Ex. 22).



**Example 22, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Continuation of Secondary Theme, False Recapitulation**

After this third dramatic intervention something unexpected happens: the music moves forward. The oscillating repetition of the notes b-flat and a, hesitates at first, suggesting "To be or not to be," before, finally, Joachim regenerates a sense of momentum, which gives the music a new, energetic purpose. Adorno, to whom we briefly return, tells us that such decisive moments are not uncommon in Beethoven's developments and refers to such a case as the "moment when subjectivity intervenes

[...].”<sup>54</sup> The music finally seems to have found a way forward where there was none before. After this third, and last, dramatic intervention the music, indeed, develops momentum and all the energy that has been trapped thus far seems to be released in a rash of uncontrolled emotion. This revival, in fact, occurs twenty measures later in the recapitulation, examined below.

Through the varying tempo markings and three-fold intervention in the development, Joachim generates a vivid sense of dramatic pacing, which goes beyond, in fact, against, the expectations of sonata form. Let us pause and briefly consult two works especially attractive to the New German circle and performed at Weimar while Joachim was there, Schumann’s Overture to *Manfred* and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, both of which may have inspired Joachim. In 1852 *Manfred* was performed in its entirety for the first time in Weimar under Liszt’s baton, and joined on the same program with Wagner’s *Faust* Overture.<sup>55</sup> Jost emphasizes in the *Manfred* overture certain “Abbruchstellen,” that is, moments in the music, where suddenly the flow stops and the texture is severely reduced, which can be understood as one type of “deviation [from

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<sup>54</sup> Adorno, *Beethoven*, 64.

<sup>55</sup> Daverio and Sams, “Schumann, Robert.” Also see Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt* (New York: Dover, 1966), 137.

standard sonata form” (“Abweichung [von der üblichen Sonatensatzform]”),<sup>56</sup> whose purpose is to hint subtly at the “poetic idea” (see Ex. 23).

The image shows a musical score for Schumann's *Manfred Overture*, specifically the section titled "Kreisende Figur". The score is written for four staves: Flute (Fl), Violin 1 (Vln1), Violin 2 (Vln2), and Violoncello (Vc). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Flute part begins with a "Solo" marking and plays a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The Violin 1 part enters with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The Violin 2 part enters with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The Violoncello part enters with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p dolce*, *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. There are also performance instructions like "< >" and "8".

**Example 23, Schumann, *Manfred Overture*, “Kreisende Figur” Initiating a Dramatic Minimization of Texture**

Another model for Joachim’s formal dramatic action might have been Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, the paradigmatic Beethovenian work embraced by the New German school. Through its exemplary transcendence of “absolute” (instrumental) music and eruption into the vocal idiom in the last movement as well as through its sheer monumental dimensions it served as a guiding work for Liszt and his followers. Joachim mentioned it in several letters, expounding on it, for example, in a letter to Gisela, who, upon hearing it for the first time, was overwhelmed with emotion. Gisela wrote to Joachim that “the 9th Symphony is for me the most beautiful, and saddest, that

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<sup>56</sup> Jost, “Ouvertüren,” 369-370.

I have ever heard,"<sup>57</sup> to which Joachim responded: "The 9th Symphony is not the saddest that has been written, but well the most moving. Either it must have been performed poorly – or you must hear it once more. If I could experience the blessing of performing it for you according to my wish!"<sup>58</sup> One performance, albeit perhaps not according to Joachim's wish, happened presumably in Weimar. In a letter to Hans von Bülow in 1857 Joachim told his friend about a Hanover performance of the Ninth Symphony while also recalling the "old days" – unmistakably implying Weimar – where the two of them met in 1851<sup>59</sup> while working together under Liszt: "Recently we performed the [9<sup>th</sup>] Symphony here, and namely in a way that you would have gladly remembered the old times."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "... die 9te Sinfonie ist mir das Schönste – und Traurigste, was ich jemals gehört." Gisela von Arnim, Nachlass, Freies Deutsches Hochstift Hs-#10469. Letter from Gisela to Joachim of April 21, 1856.

<sup>58</sup> "Die 9te Sinfonie ist nicht das Traurigste was geschrieben ist, aber wohl das Rührendste. Sie muss entweder nicht gut aufgeführt worden sein – oder du mußt sie noch einmal hören. Könnte ich die Seligkeit [*sic*] erleben, sie Dir nach meinem Wunsch vorzuführen!" Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 95, letter of April 21, 1856.

<sup>59</sup> Alan Walker, et al, "Liszt, Franz," in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/48265pg11> (accessed February 5, 2012).

<sup>60</sup> "Neulich führten wir die [9.] Sinfonie hier auf, und zwar so, daß Du Dich gern alter Zeiten dabei erinnern haben würdest." *Joachim Briefe*, I:475, letter to Hans von Bülow of December 1857.

It is unclear if Joachim was thinking of the Karlsruhe Festival in 1853 – when Bülow, Joachim, and Liszt were gathered in southern Germany, bringing to the stage works of the New German school and the Ninth Symphony, in what reviewers describe as a unrehearsed disaster – or if Joachim was recalling another, more positively memorable, occasion. But clearly the Ninth was regarded as emblematic of “eines extremen Progressistenthums” (“an extreme progressiveness”)<sup>61</sup> so much so that Bülow remarked in the 1850s: “[Die Neunte], die hier [=in Berlin] immer noch der Zehnte nicht versteht.”<sup>62</sup>

Let us return, once again, to Adorno. His interpretation of the Ninth Symphony, to which Joachim may have subscribed, gives a convincing model for dramatic action in *Hamlet*. Adorno tellingly compares the constantly dissolving “action” of the development in the first movement, which procrastinates until no longer tolerable and eventually bursts into the recapitulation, to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*:

The development of the Ninth Symphony is especially curious, being heavy with allegorical depth. For the working-out and intensification of the closing motif does not lead directly, as in similarly constructed works, to the climax and the beginning of the recapitulation, but ebbs away [...]. Then, suddenly, with a kind of jerk the [...] development is resumed and, precipitously, almost as if no further procrastination were tolerable, the climax is reached in a few pages of score. It is

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<sup>61</sup> Hans von Bülow, *Briefe und Schriften* 3, ed. Marie von Bülow (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1899), 135.

<sup>62</sup> “[The Ninth], which here [in Berlin] every tenth person still does not understand.” Ibid., 37.

almost like Hamlet, who [...] finally, at the last moment, helplessly compelled by the situation, achieves in an unplanned, gestural way what could not be accomplished as a “development.” The formal scheme of the Gordian knot.<sup>63</sup>

Adorno’s analogy to Hamlet is striking, and the dramatic action before the recapitulation, indeed, similar to Joachim’s, whose three instances of intervention make the development section the central stage on which Joachim choreographs Hamlet’s action, or rather inaction: Hamlet wants to move forward but is held back by his reflection, which blocks his will to act. Joachim expresses his programmatic design through formal means that achieve a similar “allegorical depth” as Beethoven’s in Adorno’s view. However, as we shall see next, Joachim’s recapitulation confronts us with a severe formal alteration – in contrast to the exposition – possibly representing yet another level of Hamlet’s conflicted psyche.

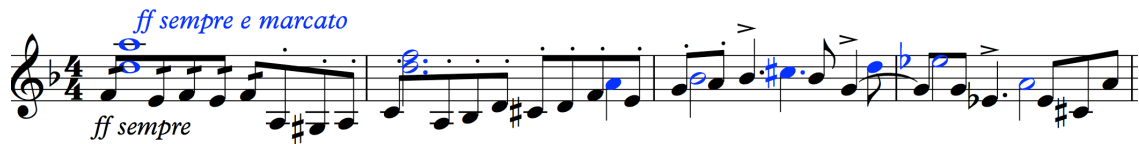
The recapitulation that follows the threefold intervention in the development comes as a forceful, dramatic blow that exceeds all expectations. After the failed false return of the two themes the recapitulation joins both together, finally releasing, through *ff sempre (e marcato)* in all instruments, all the trapped energy. It is unusual enough that the themes are stacked, but most strikingly, the secondary theme, heard dominantly in the full brass, is altered harmonically. It does not appear simply in the minor, thereby

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<sup>63</sup> Adorno, *Beethoven*, 65.



fulfilling its harmonic promise, but with a harsh diminished fifth, e-flat-a, intensely disappointing our memory of the sonorous perfect fifth in the exposition.



**Example 24, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Recapitulation (mm. 340-343)**

This recapitulation (Ex. 24) seems legitimized by what came before: all focus here is on the secondary theme, which, besides its false appearance in mm. 288, has barely surfaced in the development (not counting one of its accompanimental figures, which appeared in a remotely similar guise in m. 223ff.; compare with m. 116). The recapitulation also clarifies the function of the slow introduction. The main motive of the slow introduction appears in the coda, now a brisk *Presto*, and shows the “consequence” of the work and of the course of Hamlet, who seems to be literally and desperately competing with time before his own time expires. However, unlike the primary and secondary themes, the introductory motive does not return, which leads to the conclusion that, after all, the return of the slow introduction in the development was not meant to fulfill its role as part of an “exposition” *per se* but was, in essence, functionally unwarranted. (Joachim’s “indecision” about the slow introduction reflects perhaps at yet another level Hamlet’s indecision, to which we shall return.)

The doubly “tragic” expression, achieved through the secondary theme in the tonic minor and through the bending of the theme through the diminished fifth, begs the question whether the secondary theme relates to Ophelia. This conclusion is not unlikely, given how classically and, one could argue, “feminine” according to stereotypical Western classical-thematic opposites, she has “appeared” in the exposition. It is also not unlikely considering that Schumann, presumably unaware of the title of the work, said that, as he went on reading, it seemed as if “the scene became more and more illuminated, and Ophelia and Hamlet stepped bodily forward.”<sup>64</sup> Schumann’s comment, and Joachim’s unusual treatment of the second theme may have reflected a fundamental change in the nineteenth-century interpretation of Ophelia, influenced in no small part by Harriet Smithson’s celebrated and sensational performances of the role in Paris in the 1820s and 30s. Of course, Joachim did not experience these performances, but Franz Liszt attended at least one in 1833.<sup>65</sup> Finally, if we consider Ophelia’s mental deterioration and tragic outcome in Shakespeare’s play, it may very well be that by altering the secondary theme in the recapitulation Joachim was aiming to depict an unidealized representation of her madness, much unlike those “shallow” Italian examples raised in the 1838 issue of the *NZfM*. As we shall see, Liszt, too, in his

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<sup>64</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:47, letter from Robert Schumann to Joachim of June 8, 1853.

<sup>65</sup> Franz Liszt, *Selected Letters*, ed. and trans. Adrian Williams (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 20.

symphonic poem on *Hamlet* took the trouble to allow another strikingly unidealized Ophelia to “step bodily forward.”

Joachim’s score presents two musical “cues” that suggest an extramusical, heroic significance – a march-like allusion and a repeated chromatic descent. Immediately following the stacking of the two themes in the recapitulation, Joachim inserts a march; its brief, heroic burst in D major quickly turns to the minor and motivically deteriorates, as if the battle were lost (Ex. 25).



**Example 25, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture (mm. 356-359)**

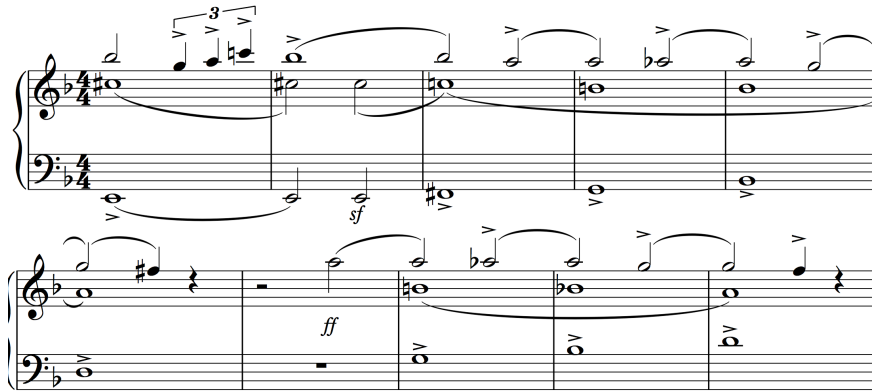
The march as a topos, of course, has many precedents in Beethoven; what is more, a relevant precedent is in Schumann’s Overture to *Julius Cäsar* (1851, premiered August 1852, publ. 1854), which, according to Jost, directly points to Shakespeare’s play (Ex. 26).<sup>66</sup>



**Example 26, Schumann, Overture to *Julius Cäsar***

<sup>66</sup> Jost, “Ouvertüren,” 372.

But these brief heroic moments in Joachim's overture yield to a dark pessimism, expressed in a repeating chromatic descending gesture, reminiscent of a similar passage in his *Abendglocken* Op. 5 No. 2 (see Ch. 1, Ex. 8, p. 57).



**Example 27, Joachim, *Hamlet Overture* (mm. 422-437)**

This figure (Ex. 27) is again reminiscent of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.



**Example 28, Beethoven, *Ninth Symphony*, First Movement, Chromatic Motive (mm. 513-516)**

Confirming the above-suggested image of the lost battle, the chromatic descent (Ex. 27)– a paradigmatic figure of lament – suggests yet in another way that all is lost, as does the harsh and desperate-sounding trumpet fanfare simultaneously sounding with the chromatic descent.

Two other heroic overtures of Beethoven seem to have exerted an impact on Joachim's *Hamlet: Egmont* and *Coriolanus*, likewise two favorite works of the New German school, cherished for their "specific 'poetic' content."<sup>67</sup> Joachim, in fact, repeatedly mentions their importance to him, for example, in this letter to Gisela from 1854: "I am actually rather well and fortified by the *Coriolanus* Overture [. . .] which I have conducted the last few days – that is the spirit of heroes."<sup>68</sup> On another occasion Joachim recommended to Gisela that Herman Grimm, her fiancé, should have Beethoven's *Egmont* performed before his play *Demetrius*, instead of Joachim's overture to *Demetrius*,<sup>69</sup> which the composer evidently felt uncomfortable presenting on this occasion.<sup>70</sup> Two weeks later, Joachim decided that *Coriolanus*, not *Egmont*, would fit even better: "[*Coriolanus*] is better suited than the *Egmont* Overture, and then too it is almost my favorite work of the great Ludwig van."<sup>71</sup> Confirming this impression, Joachim

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<sup>67</sup> Richard Taruskin, "Midcentury: New German School; Liszt's Symphonic Poems; Harmonic Explorations," in *The Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), III:411.


<sup>68</sup> "Ich bin eigentlich recht wohl und gekräftigt durch die *Coriolan* Ouvertüre [...], die ich in den letzten Tagen dirigiert habe – das ist Heldengeist." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 36, letter of April 29, 1854.

<sup>69</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:151, letter to Gisela von Arnim of February 1, 1854.

<sup>70</sup> See Chapter 3, p. 183, fn. 11.


revealed to her two years later that “*Coriolanus* is one of my favorite pieces of music [. . .], the spirit is fortified with its currents, like the old giants when they trod the earth, healed from their wounds. How I have longed for those sounds, so moving and simple at the same time, so full of change yet so thick, rancorous, and tender like day and night next to each other, everything a fiery gush of souls –.”<sup>72</sup>

It seems that Joachim’s *Hamlet*, not least through the “wechselvolle” nature of his fragment-like primary material and periodic large-phrased secondary theme, betrays a nod to *Coriolanus*’s periodic syntax and gesture.

 <p><b>Example 29, Beethoven, <i>Coriolanus</i>, Secondary Theme (mm. 64)</b></p> <p>4 m. theme in C major (harmonically open, ending on V)</p> <p>4 m. repeat, different instrumentation</p>		
	a	mm. 178
	a'	mm. 182

<sup>71</sup> “Sie [*Coriolan*] passt doch besser wie die *Egmont*-Ouv., und dann ist sie fast mein Lieblingswerk vom großen Ludwig van.” Ibid., I:156, letter to Gisela von Arnim of February 14, 1854.

<sup>72</sup> “... dies [*Coriolanus*] ist eine meiner liebsten Musiken [...], der Geist erstarkt an ihren Luftwellen, wie die alten Giganten, wenn sie die Erde berührten, von ihren Wunden gesundeneten. Wie ersehnte ich die Klänge, so bewegt und einfach zugleich, so *wechselvoll* und doch so dicht, Groll und Zärtlichkeit wie Tag und Nacht neben einander, alles Ein [*sic*] feuriger Seelenerguß – .” Ibid., I:320, letter to Gisela von Arnim of February 29, 1856.

4 m. modulation to D minor	b'	mm. 186
4 m. theme in D minor	a	mm. 190
4 m. repeat, different instrumentation and modulation to E minor.	a+b	mm. 194
4 m. fragment of the theme in E minor, braking of the pattern theme gets lost in a repetitive half-step transitional gesture	a	mm. 198 mm. 206
 <p><b>Example 30, Joachim, <i>Hamlet</i>, Secondary Theme (mm. 115)</b> (sentence structure aa'b)</p>		
4 m. theme in F major (harmonically open ending on V)	a	mm. 115
4 m. repeat, different instrumentation	a'	mm. 119
8 m. continuation	b	mm. 123
4 m. theme	a	mm. 131
4 m. repeat, different instrumentation	a+b	mm. 135
8 measures continuation, braking of the pattern	a	mm. 140
theme gets lost in a repetitive four-note transitional gesture		mm. 150

**Figure 2, Joachim, *Hamlet*: Comparison with Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture**

The similarity of Joachim's *Hamlet* to *Egmont* (Fig. 2), on the other hand, is most notable in the opening of Joachim's overture. Both works begin with a slow introduction in 3/2 meter and start off with a fanfare (m. 1), followed, a major sixth below, by the continuation, in which a lyrical, though dissonant, theme spans a diminished seventh, first heard in the oboe moving to the secondary minor dominant (C minor) and then continuing in the strings back to the tonic. Joachim composed a lyrical line on the dominant, whose first gesture encompasses a diminished fourth that proceeds to a

diminished seventh (Ex. 32) strikingly similar to Beethoven's line (Ex. 31), before reaffirming the tonic.

Oboe

Strings

*p*

*ff*

**Example 31, Beethoven, *Egmont* Overture (mm. 5-9)**

*pp* *cresc.* *fz* *dim.*

**Example 32, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture (mm. 5-9)**

The manifest programmatic features of Joachim's *Hamlet* suggest on the most obvious level a dramatic narrative expressed musically through the interferences and tempo alternations, which agitate and interrupt the flow of the music, and, furthermore, convey a "Spannung zur Sonatensatzform."<sup>73</sup> The strong "poetic" sense is achieved not least through the harshly altered secondary theme in the recapitulation, perhaps hinting at Ophelia's madness. Furthermore, the topos of a lost battle – Hamlet's tragic fate – is evoked through motivically and harmonically deteriorating fanfares. Joachim's program powerfully and expressively drives the music to the point of altering sonata form, which in turn offers an important point of reference to Beethoven. By wavering between

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<sup>73</sup> Jost, "Ouvertüren," 372.



adhering and distancing himself from Beethoven's classical model, Joachim expresses, as Schumann had before him, his programmatic design. And this design is not merely "äußere Nachahmung" – it engages the substance of the work, the "experience" of indecision or disunity, or, more broadly construed, a multi-leveled *Zerrissenheit*, in Shakespeare's tragedy, in the reality of Germany after the *Vormärz*, and in the maturation of Joachim as a young composer.<sup>74</sup>

Whether or not Joachim knew the *NZfM* article cited at the beginning of this chapter, his treatment of Shakespeare's *unmusikalisch* "Held der Reflexion" is expressive, to say the least. The characteristic swaying between two poles, of action and inaction, is reflected on multiple levels in Joachim's work. For example, the return of the slow *Moderato* introduction three times throughout the piece, juxtaposed with *Allegro* sections, and the repeated moving and stopping of the musical flow point to the musical indecisiveness of Hamlet's troubled mind. Schlegel actually saw the stumbling motion as a central issue of Shakespeare's text, maintaining that:

The particular circumstance by which one can find this play less theatrical than other tragedies of Shakespeare is that the main action in the last acts stops, or seems to become regressive. But this was unavoidable and lies in the nature of the matter. The entire [play], indeed, aims to show how a deliberation that exhausts all the particulars and possible consequences of a deed to the limits of

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<sup>74</sup> As pointedly expressed in Jürgen Uhde's analysis of Beethoven's *Les Adieux* Sonata. See Jürgen Uhde, *Denken und Spielen* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1988), 450.

human forethought, paralyzes the zest for action, as Hamlet himself expresses it.<sup>75</sup>

Schlegel indicates that the stopping (“Stocken”) indeed stems from the inner turmoil of Hamlet, whose brooding to the limits of “human foresight paralyzes the zest for action.” By musically hinting at the “Held der Reflexion,” Joachim evoked Schlegel’s interpretation of Hamlet’s tragic flaw, “Reflexion,” as described in the 1838 *NZfM* article, in unmistakably clear ways.

## **2.2 Motivic Transformation**

When we consider that much of the overture juxtaposes the slow introductory *Moderato*, featuring the ever-present four-note motive, with the contrasting *Allegro* section, in which the primary theme prevails, we are, perhaps, not surprised that much of the piece is comprised of these two thematic realms, omitting the secondary theme, which makes only a minimal appearance. After an initial full presentation in the exposition it disappears in the development almost entirely (except for a sudden

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<sup>75</sup> “Der einzige Umstand, weswegen man dies Stück weniger theatralisch finden könnte als andere Trauerspiele Shakspeares, ist, dass die Haupthandlung in den letzten Aufzügen ins Stocken geräth, oder gar rückgängig zu werden scheint. Dies war jedoch unvermeidlich und liegt in der Natur der Sache. Das Ganze zweckt ja dahin ab, zu zeigen, wie eine Überlegung, welche alle Beziehungen und möglichen Folgen einer That bis an die Grenze der menschlichen Voraussicht erschöpfen will, die Thatkraft lähmt; wie Hamlet selber es ausdrückt.” August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur: Vorlesungen*, 248.

emergence as a false reprise). Put another way, Joachim's treatment of the secondary theme brings to mind Hamlet's increased distancing of Ophelia in the play.<sup>76</sup>

Comparing the opening four-note motive (Ex. 33) with the primary theme (Ex. 34) reveals that the latter draws on the former through repetition and sequence, evoking Liszt's thematic transformation, as has been pointed out in recent Joachim scholarship.<sup>77</sup>



**Example 33, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Opening Motive (mm. 1-2)**



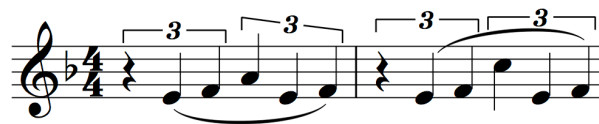
**Example 34, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Primary Theme (mm. 38-41)**

Also the secondary theme (Ex. 35), as the following example of its accompanimental figure reveals, draws on this four-note element.

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<sup>76</sup> The exclusion of the secondary theme in the working-out process certainly has implications for the development's "dialectical" or, in Joachim's case rather un-dialectical, method. Oechsle maintains that "the lack alone of an extended and conflict-ridden development [must] be reckoned as a defect" ("allein schon das Fehlen einer ausgedehnten und konfliktreichen Durchführung [muss] als Mangel bezeichnet werden.") See Siegfried Oechsle, *Symphonik nach Beethoven* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1992), 122.

<sup>77</sup> Winkler, "Schauspielmusik – Konzertouvertüre – Tondichtung: Joseph Joachim im Weimarer Gegenlicht," 95.



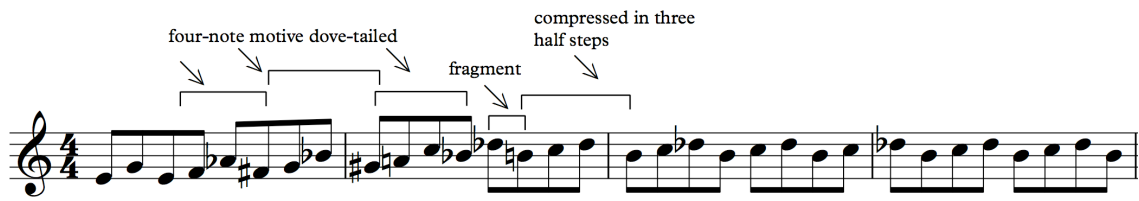
**Example 35, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Secondary Theme, Accompaniment  
(mm. 115-116)**

Because of the similarity of motivic material in the introductory and primary themes (Ex. 33 and 34), we are sometimes hard pressed to discern—especially in the fragmented stages of the development—if Joachim is working with one or the other.

Oechsle defines motivic transformation as a process that retains intervallic structure: “By the transformation [of themes] one can grasp a change in thematicism, in which a (diastematic) substructure is always preserved.”<sup>78</sup> This retention does not always obtain in Joachim’s theme. While the four notes of the introductory motive contain a whole step, a minor third up, and a whole step down, altogether encompassing a perfect fourth, these intervals are not preserved in the primary theme, where the initial whole-step has become a half-step. Furthermore, Joachim’s manipulation of the primary theme to produce an example of what we have called a “trapped motive” (see Ch. 1, p. 57), also contradicts here the assumption of a “diastematisches Substrat.”

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<sup>78</sup> “Unter der Transformation [von Themen] kann ein Wandel der Thematik begriffen werden, bei dem ein (diastematisches) ‘Substrat’ stets erhalten bleibt.” Oechsle, 129.



**Example 36, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, Four-note Motive Dovetailed (mm. 110 ff.)**

Ex. 36 features the dovetailing of the original four-note motive; in addition, the size of the interval is progressively reduced to a major third, then a minor third, until, in the end two half-steps are squeezed together into a whole-tone.

While many of Joachim's motives stem from the same source – most notably in the introductory and primary themes – he relies perhaps too heavily on periodic phrasing and “quadratische Syntax,”<sup>79</sup> – especially in the secondary themes. He thereby betrays an influence of Liszt’s thematic model, whose motives in his symphonic poem *Hamlet*, as Schmidt pointed out, “do not reach the quality of ‘solid’ themes” until the end of the first part (i.e. until the Hamlet theme in mm. 105 ff., the first to deserve the label “theme,” according to Schmidt).<sup>80</sup> Until this point Schmidt emphasizes that Liszt relies on one-, two-, and three-measure fragments.<sup>81</sup> However, it seems that Joachim alters

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<sup>79</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, “Liszt's Bergsymphonie und die Idee der Symphonischen Dichtung” in *Jahrbuch des Staatlichen Instituts für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz*, 1975 (Berlin: 1976), 108.

<sup>80</sup> Julian Schmidt, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Friedrich Ludwig Herbig, 1856), III:531.

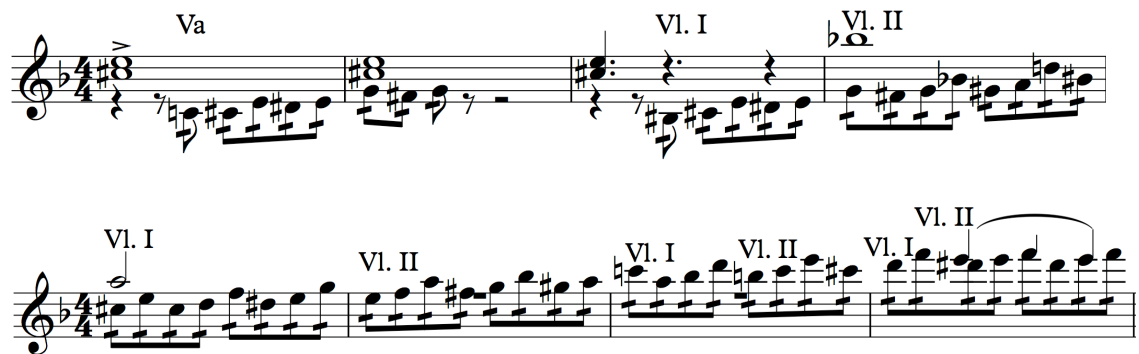
<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

Liszt's concept of thematic transformation and applies it in his own way by transforming his motives, or elements of his themes, in a rather idiosyncratic, obsessive manner. He uses his own process of transforming motives to create "trapped" motives, an element arguably unique to his style; these motives are used not only in this overture but also in many of his other works. As discussed in *Abendglocken*, the "trapped" motive can be seen as a connection to Joachim's *Psychologische Musik* – designating, in effect, an outlet of his troubled emotions through composing, which obsessive repetition – as in the "trapped" motives – seems to evoke at once subtly and not so subtly.

### **2.3 Trapped Motive**

The "trapped" motive in *Abendglocken* distinguishes Joachim's use of ciphers considerably from Schumann's, evoking, perhaps, contemporary representation in photography, as discussed in Ch. 1, but clearly having some significance to Joachim, for he used this device in smaller pieces and in all three overtures. In his Overture to *Hamlet* Joachim's introduction of the "trapped motive" differs from that in *Abendglocken*, yet is also strongly suggestive. It serves here, in the overture, – on a deeper and perhaps more psychological level than the tempo fluctuations – for Hamlet's constant stumbling. Hamlet wants to move forward but is held back.

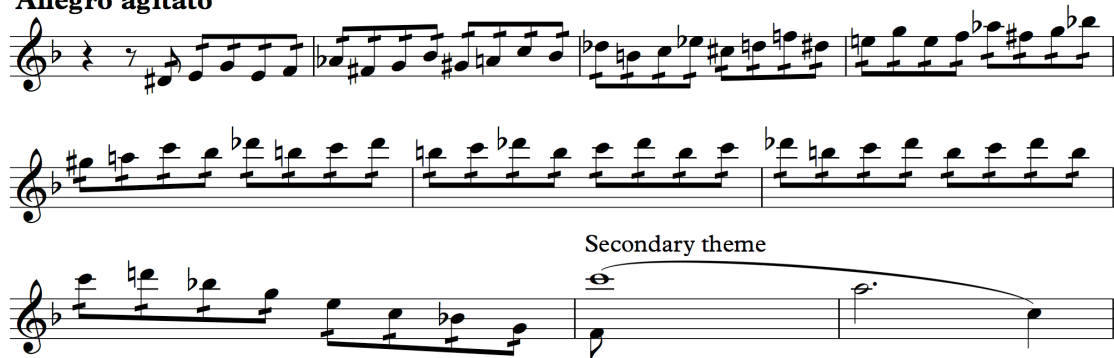
We have mentioned above the striking interruptions in the development, which give the impression of trapped energy, leading to a point where the music breaks out in a rash, “as if procrastination were no longer tolerable,” to recite Adorno. Before bursting into the recapitulation, however, Joachim initiates a steep intensification, thickening the texture gradually and unfolding *poco a poco* a large-scale crescendo. A four-note fragment of the main theme pushes forward, ascending ever higher until eventually getting “trapped,” before leading to an arpeggiation and ending on an oscillating half-step figure, which moves straight into the recapitulation. Thus, Ex. 37 shows the trapped motive as a consequence of energy longwithheld, which is finally released:



**Example 37, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture (mm. 322-329)**

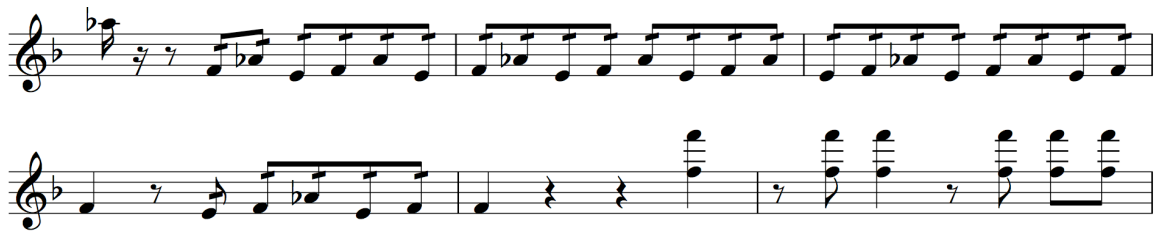
Another occurrence of the “trapped” motive occurs immediately before the entrance of the secondary theme in the exposition, where the music had lost its momentum, not least caused by the many juxtapositions of Moderato and Allegro. Here the “trapped” motive again creates relief from the previous lethargy and moves the music forward and into the secondary theme (Ex. 38).

**Allegro agitato**



**Example 38, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture (mm. 107-116)**

And still another occasion of the trapped motive occurs right before the beginning of the development (Ex. 39):



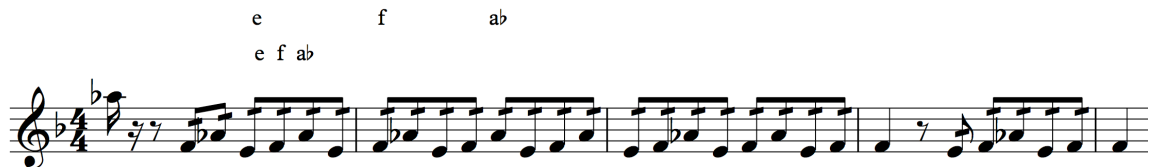
**Example 39, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture (mm. 187-192)**

Here the key of F minor is reached instead of the expected secondary key of F major, a pessimistic turn enhanced by the trapped motive. Each of these three examples serves the goal of moving forward through a hurdle. What follows, in each example, is a new formal section, whether recapitulation, secondary theme, or development. And yet there is a seeming contradiction at work in each example: while the “trapped” motive propels the music formally, at the same time it holds it back through its circular motion and confines it to a narrow range, thereby bringing no true relief.



In the circling figures of Schumann's *Manfred* a considerably different motive perhaps achieves something similar. According to Jost this "figure circling around itself" ("in sich kreisende Figur") serves the purpose of interrupting the flow and creating the above-mentioned "dramatic reduction" of texture, leaving only various "kreisende Figuren."<sup>82</sup> But the effect of the circling motives here seems considerably subtler.

In Joachim's examples (Exx. 37-40) the "trapped" nature results from a four-note motive being fragmented to a three-note motive and subjected to a rhythmic pattern of four eighth notes (with *tremoli*) – a similar procedure is used in *Abendglocken* – which commingles two rhythmically separate iterations of the motto: one in the literal succession of sixteenth notes and the other articulated by the sixteenth notes falling on the beat:



**Example 40, Joachim, *Hamlet* Overture, "Trapped Motive" (mm. 187-193)**

A similar example occurs in the already mentioned *Egmont* Overture (Ex. 41), where Beethoven uses the transition between the slow introduction and the Allegro to

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<sup>82</sup> Jost, "Ouvertüren," 370.

present a “trapped” motive, although technically speaking Beethoven does not commingle two motivic iterations as does Joachim:



**Example 41, Beethoven, *Egmont* Overture, Bridge from Slow Introduction to Allegro**

This brief examination of Joachim’s “trapped” motive in the Overture to *Hamlet* – many similar instances could be cited– offers more evidence of his idiosyncratic use of motives. Although reminiscent of Beethoven’s *Egmont* and *Coriolanus*, Joachim’s motivic applications compare more tellingly to the F-A-E and G-sharp-E-A ciphers in *Abendglocken* than to Beethoven’s examples.

Unlike *Abendglocken*, however, the trapped motives in *Hamlet* do not serve the purpose of a “Denkmal” to Gisela von Arnim but can be interpreted as portraying deeper psychological layers of Hamlet. We could argue that the “trapped” motive expresses, albeit in a more subtle way than the interventions of sonata form, deep layers of Hamlet’s indecision perhaps from a perspective of the early 1850s. By taking Hamlet’s issue of “Reflexion” one step further and exploring a layer of Hamlet’s psyche, Joachim betrays that he was, indeed, rooted in his time, as we shall now explore from historical,

political, and cultural perspectives by consulting a contemporary friend and a literary-political historian.

## **2.4 Joachim and Gervinus**

There is, in fact, a subtle literary trace in Joachim's letters leading to a figure who may have influenced his Overture to *Hamlet*. In a letter explicating his overture to his good friend Woldemar Bargiel, Joachim disclosed in April 1853 (just weeks after having finished revision) that "he [Beethoven] is a deep expert of the human soul. He is the musical Shakespeare (and not Händel)."<sup>83</sup> While this observation, on first sight, seems rather cryptic, the invoked Händel-Shakespeare analogy was, in fact, typical for one specific literary critic who had just released a major Shakespeare work interpreting all of his plays in 1849. The book was *Shakespeare*, the author, Georg Gottfried Gervinus (1805-1871). Many years later, in 1866, he published the book *Händel and Shakespeare*, but he was evidently talking – and writing – about the issue already in the early 1850s. In the preface to the first of his three *Shakespeare* volumes, the author compared Shakespeare and Händel, which was likely the source of Joachim's now less cryptic comment that for

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<sup>83</sup> "...er [Beethoven] ist ein tiefer Kenner der menschlichen Seele. Er ist der musikalische Shakespeare (und nicht Händel)." *Joachim Briefe*, I:47, letter to Woldemar Bargiel of April 7, 1853.

him it was not Händel, but Beethoven who was the “deep connoisseur of the human soul” and “the Shakespeare of music.”<sup>84</sup>

While Joachim’s letters of 1852 and 1853 do not yield more insight into Gervinus’s readings on *Hamlet*, the Shakespeare-Händel analogy is rare enough (and curious enough) that we can safely assume that Joachim knew Gervinus’s work. This hunch is confirmed a few years later, beginning in 1856, when a correspondence between Joachim and Gervinus began. Joachim’s letters reveal that they met regularly at Gervinus’s residence in Heidelberg during the summers, discussing Gervinus’s efforts toward a Händel edition, among other projects.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Joachim proved to be an important bridge for Gervinus to the German aristocracy, especially to Joachim’s employer from 1853 on (the King of Hanover). One last fact reaffirms that Joachim actively followed Gervinus’s work on Shakespeare in the early 1850s. In the section on *Hamlet* Gervinus asserts that the play is, for the playwright’s character and essence, “next to *Henry IV* perhaps of the most significance.”<sup>86</sup> As it happened, Joachim turned to

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., I:47.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., I:350, letter of June 20, 1856; Ibid., I:370, letter of August 27, 1856, Gervinus thanks Joachim for his support regarding the Händel edition.

<sup>86</sup> Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* “ist ein Stück, das für Shakespeare’s Character und Wesen neben *Heinrich IV* vielleicht von der sprechendsten Bedeutung ist.” Gottfried Gervinus, *Shakespeare*, 4 vols. (Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1849), III: 241.

an overture on *Heinrich IV* within the very year of finishing *Hamlet*, 1853; like *Hamlet*, *Henry IV* had no (significant) history of musical adaptation.

Gervinus's reading of *Hamlet* took important features from earlier existing theories of Goethe, August Schlegel, and Eduard Gans, all dealing with shades of Hamlet's "Reflexion," while advancing them in a crucial way and, at the same time, developing a new line of argument. Gervinus begins with Goethe, arguing that he was the first to solve the *Hamlet* riddle, which had left generations of thinkers, including Voltaire, Johnson and Malone, clueless.<sup>87</sup> The constant indecision and inaction, which is one of the central *Hamlet* issues, was finally explained convincingly in Goethe's so-called *Sensibilitätstheorie*: "As Goethe expressed it: [it was Shakespeare's intention] to draw a soul, on whom a deed was laid of which the soul was incapable."<sup>88</sup> The sensibility pertains to the character Hamlet, who is described as a morally righteous but fragile character, confronted, through destiny's workings, with more than he can master, thus setting in motion the tragedy's downward spiral.<sup>89</sup> Goethe's *Sensibilitätstheorie*, advanced through *Wilhelm Meister* (1795/96), was developed forward through two important and

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> "... wie Goethe es ausdrückte: [war es Shakespeare's Intention] eine Seele zu zeichnen, auf die eine That gelegt sei, der sie sich nicht gewachsen fühlt." Ibid., 245.

<sup>89</sup> Elsa Hennings, *Hamlet: Shakespeares "Faust"-Tragödie* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1954), 38.

related theories – Schlegel’s theory of *Hamlet* as *Gedankentrauerspiel* (“a tragedy of thoughts,” drawn from his *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur* [sic], which were delivered in 1808 and published 1809-1811)<sup>90</sup> and through Eduard Gans’s *Reflexionstheorie*.<sup>91</sup> All three, Schlegel, Goethe and Gans, are cited in the text of 1838 discussed in the beginning of this chapter<sup>92</sup> because their works explaining Hamlet’s reflection and consequent inaction were still regarded as relevant.

August Wilhelm Schlegel, whose main contribution to Shakespeare consisted of the German translations, a systematic endeavor undertaken between 1797 and 1810 and covering most plays, sees Hamlet’s paralyzed will to act as the result of an overweight of essentially virtuous traits such as thinking and recognizing (“das Überwiegen des Denkens und Erkennens”).<sup>93</sup>

The piece may be intended as a tragedy of thought, in the first instance through Hamlet’s “incessant and never satisfied brooding about human destiny, about the dark entanglement of the world’s occurrences,” which move the viewer to ponder; and in the second instance the piece may be intended as a tragedy of thought through its demonstration “how a reflection, which explores all

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<sup>90</sup> John, “Schlegel, August Wilhelm von,” <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118607960.html>.

<sup>91</sup> Eduard Gans, *Vermischte Schriften*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1834).

<sup>92</sup> Seidel, “Hamlet in der Oper: Musikalisch-ästhetische Gespräche.”

<sup>93</sup> Elsa Hennings, 40.

considerations and connections to the limit of human foresight paralyzes the energy for action.”<sup>94</sup>

While Goethe stressed a deficit in “sensuous strength” (“*sinnlicher Stärke*”),

Schlegel saw an “excess in intellectual strength” (“*Übermaß an geistiger Stärke*”).<sup>95</sup>

Eduard Gans’s work shows a perspective of a philosopher of law. His “Der Hamlet des

Ducis and der des Shakespeare” in *Vermischte Schriften* (1834) stresses the so-called

*Reflexionstheorie*, essentially calling Hamlet “the tragedy of the negation of reflection”

(“die Tragödie der Reflexionsnichtigkeit”) in which mind is “das Tragische.”<sup>96</sup> Gans was

a Hegelian and the first editor of Hegel’s lectures on world history.<sup>97</sup> We will limit our

focus here to Gans’s views on Hamlet that do not substantially agree with Hegel’s.<sup>98</sup>

Like most Hegelians (but unlike Hegel himself), Gans brings forward an abstract, philosophical theory, asserting that “Hamlet is left to pit his ‘understanding’

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<sup>94</sup> Elsa Hennings, 40; August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur: Vorlesungen*, III:247-248. “Das Stück sei als ‘Gedanken-Trauerspiel’ dazu bestimmt, einmal durch Hamlet’s ‘anhaltendes und nie befriedigtes Nachsinnen über die menschlichen Schicksale, über die düstere Verworrenheit der Weltbegebenheiten’ den Zuschauer zum Nachdenken zu bewegen und andererseits zu zeigen, ‘wie eine Überlegung, welche alle Beziehungen und möglichen Folgen einer Tat bis an die Grenzen der menschlichen Voraussicht erschöpfen will, die Tatkraft lähmt.’”

<sup>95</sup> Hennings, 40.

<sup>96</sup> Lüthi, 53.

<sup>97</sup> Paulin, 446.

<sup>98</sup> [Hegel’s view on Hamlet]

(‘Verstand’), the powers of individual initiative and intelligence, against the ‘substantial forces’ of ‘reason’ (‘Vernunft’) that underlie historical events.”<sup>99</sup> The tension between Hamlet’s “Verstand” and the element of “Vernunft,” which he encounters as embodied in Laertes and Fortinbras – representing “reason” on the level of family and state – make him eventually “an unwitting instrument of justice to which he cannot aspire.” Because he does not do what family (Laertes) and state (Fortinbras) demand of him, he “loses any claim to moral rightness” and, as an instrument of justice “he is not a judge (‘Richter’), merely an executor (‘Vollstrecker’).”<sup>100</sup> The “tragic satisfaction” nevertheless occurs through Fortinbras’s stepping forward to power at the end; he represents the “Weltgericht” and “fulfills the dictates of ‘Weltgeschichte.’”<sup>101</sup> This theory is strikingly different from the other two theories because it culminates with Hamlet achieving, as a powerless instrument, a larger goal, in which Fortinbras takes responsibility over the world’s “out of joint” matters, to evoke Shakespeare’s phrase.

Gervinus’s work (1849) represents a vigorous departure from the last three thinkers but at the same time a natural continuation: Hamlet is seen as caught in reflection, powerless and weak. However, Gervinus’s stance has two important

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<sup>99</sup> Roger Paulin, 447; also see Eduard Gans, II:284.

<sup>100</sup> Gans, II:290, cited in Paulin, 447.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 292, cited in Paulin, 447.



additions: first, he synchronizes the theories above but goes beyond by taking Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* as the basis for a predominantly *psychological* portrayal of Hamlet, one at which he arrives by using different methods from all three authors named above.

Second, Gervinus conversely turns against Goethe [and Schiller], but is now speaking as a philosopher and politician of the real world, asserting that *Hamlet* represents a mirror to Germany of 1849. Thus, he connects his *Hamlet* interpretation to the political climate of post-1848 agitation and cleanly breaks away with Germany's literary classicist past.<sup>102</sup>

Gervinus's new method consists of dispensing with the "philosophical method" ("philosophische Methode"<sup>103</sup>), which all three authors mentioned above used to advance their interpretive claims. Instead, Gervinus focused in his Shakespeare interpretations on the characters' psychological layers. Gervinus's innovative method seems symbolically expressed in the following sentence from his *Shakespeare* (1849) text: "As Goethe expressed it: ... it was Shakespeare's intention to draw a soul on which a deed was laid, which did not feel up to the task."<sup>104</sup> There are, however, significant changes in his rephrasing of Goethe (only one of which has been noted by Shakespeare

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<sup>102</sup> Gervinus, I:vi.

<sup>103</sup> Hans Jürg Lüthi, *Das Deutsche Hamletbild seit Goethe* (Bern: Paul Haupt, 1951), 77; Gervinus, *Shakespeare* ("Introduction"), I:31-33.

<sup>104</sup> "Wie Goethe es ausdrückte: [war es Shakespeare's Intention] eine Seele zu zeichnen, auf die eine That gelegt sei, der sie sich nicht gewachsen fühlt." Gervinus, III:245.

scholar Lüthi).<sup>105</sup> While Gervinus uses the phrase “eine Seele zeichnen,” as Lüthi has pointed out, and “sich gewachsen fühlen,” (as Lüthi has missed to point out), Goethe’s wording, put into the mouth of Wilhelm in *Wilhelm Meister* was: “It’s clear to me that Shakespeare wanted to depict a great deed laid upon a soul who is not up to the task.”<sup>106</sup>

Gervinus changed Goethe’s “schildern” of a soul, which translates to a mere describing, into the more active “drawing” of a soul; and he changed the somber, factual “[etwas] nicht gewachsen sein” to a more subjective “sich gewachsen fühlen,” thereby stressing intentionally psychological overtones, which were not part of Goethe’s novel.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, as has been pointed out, “this change shows clearly the emphasis of significance on the individual, the psychological that appears in Gervinus.”<sup>108</sup>

In contrast to Gans, who relies on philosophical scaffoldings erected around the “dialectical development of the relationship between ethically advanced deeds and individual reasoning” (“dialektische Entwicklung des Verhältnisses zwischen sittlich geforderter Tat und individuellem Verstand”), Gervinus is interested “in the individual,

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<sup>105</sup> Lüthi, 77.

<sup>106</sup> “Mir ist deutlich, dass Shakespeare habe schildern wollen: eine grosse Tat auf eine Seele gelegt, die der Tat nicht gewachsen ist.” Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, 246; Lüthi, 77.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 246. Lüthi, 77.

<sup>108</sup> “... diese Änderung zeigt deutlich die bei Gervinus eingetretene Bedeutungsverlagerung auf das Individuelle, Psychologische hin.” Lüthi, 77.

the soul of a man whom the impulse of a difficult task has brought out of balance with his nature.”<sup>109</sup> While it is true that Hegel, in his *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik* worked on, since the 1820s, an increasingly character-focused Shakespeare exegesis, his approach, as the literature explicitly emphasizes, was not as “one sidedly psychological” (“einseitig psychologisch”), as that of later “realistic” interpreters such as Gervinus.<sup>110</sup>

Perhaps we can turn now to Joachim to examine how his portrayal of *Hamlet* goes from mere “description” to “drawing” (“zeichnen”) a soul, and from “gewachsen sein” to “sich gewachsen fühlen” – in other words, how Joachim portrays Hamlet’s features that are traditionally less taken into account than the much-explored topic of reflection. The “trapped motive” seems to give ample evidence of a character wishing to move forward but being held back by an uncontrolled force. While many iterations of the swirling trapped motives in the overture *seemingly* move Hamlet forward – they accumulate at formal junctures, leading to the secondary theme, the development, and the recapitulation – each formal section, seen from another, more subtle angle, contains a critical shortcoming that negates the dynamic but nevertheless ineffective trapped

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<sup>109</sup> “... [in] das Einzelne, [in] die Seele des Mannes ‘den der Anstoss einer schwierigen Aufgabe aus dem Schwerpunkt seiner Natur gebracht hat.’” Gervinus III:245, cited in Lüthi, 77.

<sup>110</sup> Günther Erken, “Deutschland,” in *Shakespeare Handbuch*, ed. Ina Schabert (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner, 1972), 681.

motive. On the threshold to the development the trapped motive hinders the expected establishment of F major, leaving us at the end of the exposition in a pessimistic F minor.

Similarly, if the trapped motive before the secondary theme gathers sufficient momentum to reveal this theme, it nevertheless fails for the rest of the overture to produce any further “valid” appearance of this theme: it does not occur in the working-out of the development where we encounter merely a brief false recapitulation, and in the real recapitulation it is deprived of its space – stacked together with the primary theme – and disguised in an attenuated manner. In other words, the trapped motive, as forceful as it may be, fails, like Hamlet, despite its virtuous active energy. And so it resembles Hamlet, “who does not perish because of his weakness, but, on the contrary, because his strength lies in his very weakness.”<sup>111</sup> The “Übermaß”<sup>112</sup> of “sinnliche Stärke” (Goethe),<sup>113</sup> “geistige Stärke” (Schlegel),<sup>114</sup> or “Verstand”<sup>115</sup> (Gans) becomes a stumbling block.

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<sup>111</sup> Paulin, 447.

<sup>112</sup> Elsa Hennings, 40

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>115</sup> Paulin, 447, Eduard Gans, *Vermischte Schriften*, II:280-292.

Let us investigate now Gervinus's literary-political stance in the *Hamlet* debate. Gervinus's *Shakespeare* takes *Hamlet* to represent a mirror of present Germany, by levelling intense criticism towards Goethe, who, according to Gervinus, was not entirely innocent regarding Germany's misery in 1849 – barely a year after the failed March revolution. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, according to Gervinus, mirrored intensely the lethargy and political weakness of Germany, a geographical area defined not politically but, on the contrary, as a "Kulturnation."<sup>116</sup> Gervinus wished to break radically with the "spirit of the old literature,"<sup>117</sup> that is, the old literature of Goethe and Weimar classicism. This liberal activist attitude was generated, in part, by Gervinus's own life experiences: self-educated, he became a student at Heidelberg and, through his outstanding, heavily read and debated *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung* (1835-1842), he was able to secure a position as a professor, first at the prestigious University of Heidelberg in 1835, and then, in 1836, at the no less impressive University of Göttingen,<sup>118</sup> which Joachim would later attend in 1853. Soon thereafter, in 1837, Gervinus faced severe repercussions

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<sup>116</sup> Wilhelm Bleek, *Geschichte der Politikwissenschaft Sonderausgabe* (München: C. H. Beck, 2001), 106.

<sup>117</sup>"[...sein Ziel war es, mit] dem Geist der alten Literatur zu brechen," Schmidt, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, III:502.

<sup>118</sup> Erich Angermann, "Gervinus, Georg Gottfried," in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 6 (1964), <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118538918.html>.

because of his membership in a politically activist group of Göttingen poets and professors, “the Göttingen Seven.” As a consequence of their liberal protest against the annulment of the German constitution in November 1, 1837, by King Ernst August of Hanover (Joachim’s later employer), three of the seven members were expelled from the country –Jacob Grimm (one of the Grimm brothers), Christoph Dahlmann, and Gervinus.<sup>119</sup>

Taking a step back, let us examine the target of Gervinus’s literary-political criticism. With the termination of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, the *Kleinstaaterei* – Germany divided into countless principalities, a remnant of the eighteenth century – became slightly more centralized, now reduced to roughly forty states, though still fragmented.<sup>120</sup> Goethe, Schiller, and the nation’s literary-cultural blossoming during Weimar classicism, however, had given the German-speaking lands another, seemingly comparable sense of power, unity, and identity, albeit one of aesthetic nature. The Weimar classicist, idealist aesthetic, however, had already provoked a rebellion – because of its apolitical nature – in the 1830s.<sup>121</sup> The so-called “Junghegelianer” and “Jungdeutschen,” activated following the July Revolution of 1830, united, after Goethe’s

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<sup>119</sup> Angermann, Erich, “Gervinus, Georg Gottfried;” Schmidt, Julian, III:502.

<sup>120</sup> Wolfgang Dömling, *Franz Liszt* (München: C. H. Beck, 2011), 51.

<sup>121</sup> Valentin Herzog, “Brentano, Bettina,” *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon Online*.

death in 1832, against literary idealism, proclaimed the “Ende der Kunstperiode” and advocated, as Heine and many thinkers before Gervinus did,<sup>122</sup> “words rather than deeds.”<sup>123</sup> “The deed,” Heine had argued, “is the child of the word, and the pretty words of Goethe are childless. That is the curse of everything that arises merely from art.”<sup>124</sup> Not only Germany’s aesthetic identity but also literary idealism as a whole became increasingly subject to criticism, including from the pen of Gervinus.

A few decades later, in 1849, at the centenary of Goethe’s birth, celebrated by Liszt in Weimar,<sup>125</sup> the German Goethe reception had reached its lowest point in history.<sup>126</sup> In light of the failed revolution of 1848 this nadir was not entirely unexpected. As developed and progressive the German “Kulturnation” had become under Goethe, its political energy was unfocused, decentralized, and lethargic, eliciting this comment

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<sup>122</sup> Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe im Urteil*, II:73, cited in Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland*, 2 vols. (München: C. H. Beck, 1980), I:104.

<sup>123</sup> Claude Conter, “Die Entstehung der zwei Kulturen im 19. Jahrhundert,” *Kultur Poetik* 8/1 (2008): 22.

<sup>124</sup> “Die Tat ist das Kind des Wortes, und die Goetheschen schönen Worte sind kinderlos. Das ist der Fluch alles dessen was bloß durch die Kunst entstanden ist.” Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe im Urteil* II:73, cited in Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland*, I:104.

<sup>125</sup> Klaus Ries, “Die Einheit der Kunst: Franz Liszt zwischen Universalismus und Nationalismus,” in *Liszt und Europa*, ed. Detlef Altenburg (Laaber: Laaber, 2008), 32.

<sup>126</sup> Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland*, I:145.

from Gervinus: “[Germany] had no history, no state, no politics”; ‘we had only literature, learning, and art.’”<sup>127</sup> His was only one among many voices advocating a political, rather than a cultural identity dormant in “ästhetische Kontemplation.”<sup>128</sup>

Understandably, then, in German realms, Shakespeare and specifically his more realistic and less idealistic sides became immensely appealing, challenging the authority of the German classicists.<sup>129</sup> Above all, the Shakespeare trend during the post-Napoleonic restoration was not least a consequence of *Hamlet* and the widely held conviction that this play expressed, like no other work, the German “Zeitgeist.”<sup>130</sup>

Gervinus was among the most active thinkers in his attempt to break with the past, so much so that Varnhagen von Emse, a close member of the circle of Gisela von Arnim, said that it was Gervinus who initiated the “actual blackout” (“eigentliche Verdunklung”) of Goethe’s fame.<sup>131</sup> And by doing so, Gervinus invoked especially *Hamlet*, in whose character he saw a “shockingly similar” (“erschreckend ähnlich”)

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<sup>127</sup> Paulin, 388. Gervinus, *Shakespeare*, IV:6.

<sup>128</sup> Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland*, I:122.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., I:124.

<sup>130</sup> Gervinus, III:241; also Gervinus, III:286.

<sup>131</sup> Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe im Urteil*, II:350, cited in Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Goethe in Deutschland*, I:122.



mirror image of the German situation: "For entirely like Hamlet we have been placed until this last period between a task of a purely practical nature that weighed heavily and a conventional weaning from deeds and acts."<sup>132</sup> His analogy of Hamlet's and Germany's lethargy and inaction goes further in his interpretation of Hamlet in *Shakespeare*, accounting for almost every detail of Shakespeare's play:

Entirely like Hamlet, we had surely sunk deeply in the employment of the spirit and cultivating the mind even to forgetting about the external world; Wittenberg [the Lutheran, i.e. German, lands] and its legacy lay entirely in our hearts, more so than Polish fights for honor and power; so living and weaving entirely in poetry and theater, and playing on the theatre stage the task of time and rejoicing in words and in a heroism of words pleased us more than a calm stoid preparation for the seriousness of the times.<sup>133</sup>

Gervinus insinuates that Germany's 1848 revolution could have been victorious, had there been "a calm and staid preparation for the seriousness of the times," which however, due to Hamlet-like lethargy, was lacking. The final stage of this mirroring between the character Hamlet and Germany found its expression in Gervinus and Freiligrath's recalling of the famous line "Deutschland ist Hamlet," a line which, as

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<sup>132</sup> "Denn ganz so wie Hamlet sind wir ja bis zu dieser letzten Zeit hin zwischen einer hart an uns rückenden Aufgabe rein praktischer Natur und einer herkömmlichen Entwöhnung vom Thun und Handeln gestellt gewesen." Gervinus III:287.

<sup>133</sup> "Ganz so [wie Hamlet] waren wir ja in der Beschäftigung des Geistes und in der Bildung des Gemüthes tief versenkt gewesen bis zur Vergessenheit der äußeren Welt; ganz so lag uns Wittenberg und seine Vermächtnisse mehr am Herzen als Polenkämpfe um Ehre und Macht; ganz so füllte uns das Leben und Weben im Gedichte und Schauspiele aus, und auf dem Theater die Aufgabe der Zeit zu spielen, uns an Worten und an einem *Wortheldentum* zu freuen, gefiel uns mehr, als eine gelassene und gesetzte Vorbereitung für den Ernst der Zeiten." Ibid., III:287.

Gervinus pointed out, was not merely “a witty word game” (“ein geistreiches Spiel mit Worten”).<sup>134</sup> Indeed, when Gervinus wrote these telling analogies between Shakespeare and the German political climate the failed March Revolution had just occurred, and Germany had not achieved the desired unity. Gervinus argued that the failure was because, like Hamlet, Germany was paralyzed, caught at the point between “principle” and “deed” (“Grundsatz” und “Thaten”), unable to move forward to action and therefore, when suddenly confronted with the riots of 1848, it felt “overwhelmed [by the prospect of having to act]” (“überfallen [vom Augenblick des Handelns]”) because it was unprepared.<sup>135</sup>

In contemporary literary *Hamlet* discussion we see that thinkers like Gervinus went beyond earlier scholars’ philosophical debates about “Reflexion” towards a more psychological focused interpretation, which at the same time used new methods of scrutiny – founded not so much on logical philosophical argument but on the inner psychological layers of Shakespeare’s literary characters. Joachim’s *Hamlet* reveals layers of psychological detail that also go beyond sonata form: the dark melancholy and the “trapped” motive can be seen as symbolic of the psychological interior of *Hamlet*. In this time an overall increased interest in psychology became noticeable, which cast its

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 286.

<sup>135</sup> Gervinus, III:290.

influence on Joachim's compositional approach. Gervinus in his literary *Hamlet* interpretation and Joachim in his composing of *Hamlet* and, more generally, in his *Psychologische Musik*, seem to have responded to the increased interest in the human psyche from the perspective of the observer. Gervinus abandoned with older standards of Shakespeare exegesis in favor of a less methodological but more psychologically-focused approach while Joachim allegedly saw in *Psychologische Musik* an outlet for his emotions, geared toward “detecting and recognizing” his emotions with something approaching scientific precision, in order to “save them from the abyss” by transferring them into his music (see Chapter 1).

Another issue that clearly emerges in Gervinus's writings is the “Zerrissenheit” felt in the years leading up to 1848 and following the failed revolution, culturally and politically, which seems to overlap strikingly with Joachim's own “Zerrissenheit,” mirrored not only in his overture through emulation of Beethoven's style, but also in his attraction with elements that color his overture with some early realist influences. If Germany's political climate was lethargic and unable to move forward politically, Joachim's references to Beethoven in this overture composed in Weimar, where Joachim's music merely received a “brush” from the “progressive” Liszt, expresses a similar situation of being caught between the past and the future. Gervinus helps us to understand Joachim's nostalgia.

But before coming to a final interpretation of Joachim's and his music's multi-leveled mirroring of Germany in the years around 1848 – "Deutschland ist Hamlet" – let us briefly examine another musical portrayal of *Hamlet*, Liszt's symphonic poem *Hamlet* (1858) and point out an example of markedly more novel musical means to depict an old problem – Hamlet's "Reflexion," in what seems a rather nuanced psychological portrait. Liszt's use of an extraordinary, even provocative, sonority suggests that, by transcending harmonic boundaries, he broke with the "idealistic past," – something Gervinus was hoping Germany would do in the 1850s, in a political sense.

## **2.5 Liszt, Weitzmann, and the Augmented Triad: Hamlet as a Character Sketch?**

Although there are many Liszt-related issues one could cite – his use of motivic transformation, transcending of formal boundaries, and many levels of referencing Beethoven, they are beyond the scope of this chapter. For example, Beethoven "after" Liszt is a well worn topic. Most notable is Liszt's borrowing of Beethoven's development process, assimilated in his symphonic poem under the banner of "motivic transformation," as well as his inspiration from Beethoven's *Egmont* and *Coriolan* with their enactment of dramatic events," which have provided one of the important foundations of the symphonic poem through their ability to "stand independently of the

stage work to follow.”<sup>136</sup> According to Liszt it was Beethoven, “who, even if in the dark press of genius felt [the necessity of a close connection of music in general and purely instrumental music in particular with poetry and literature] as he composed *Egmont* and gave several of his instrumental works definite objective names or titles.”<sup>137</sup>

The augmented triad in *Hamlet*, however, has prompted little more than passing interest. Dahlhaus mentions in a general Liszt essay that at mid century “the augmented triad and the whole-tone scale were perceived as [modern devices]” in contrast to the, by this time, “empty” diminished-seventh chord and chromatic scale.<sup>138</sup>

No significant study has explored how Liszt used the augmented triad as a subtle means of creating a “character sketch” in *Hamlet*, comparable, though subtler than his approach to this sonority in the *Faust* Symphony. However, one Liszt scholar used

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<sup>136</sup> Nicholas Temperley, “Overture,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20616> (accessed April 9, 2013).

<sup>137</sup> “[Beethoven], der, wenn auch nur im dunklen Drang des Genius, [die Nothwendigkeit eines näheren Anschlusses der Musik im Allgemeinen und der reinen Instrumentalmusik insbesondere an Poesie und Literatur] gefühlt hatte, als er den “Egmont” komponierte und einigen seiner Instrumentalwerke bestimmte gegenständliche Namen oder Überschriften gab.” Franz Liszt, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1882), IV:114.

<sup>138</sup> “... übermäßige Dreiklang und die Ganztonleiter wirken [modern].” Carl Dahlhaus, “Franz Liszt und die Vorgeschichte der Neuen Musik: zum 150. Geburtstags des Komponisten,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 122, No. 10 (1961): 387.

the words “psychologischer Realismus” to describe other facets of *Hamlet*.<sup>139</sup> That the augmented triad could be seen as contributing to such a “character sketch” by heightening Hamlet’s “Reflexion” has not been suggested in previous *Hamlet* analyses, which, especially recently, have focused on a narrative-based interpretation.<sup>140</sup>

Like the *Faust Symphony*, Liszt’s *Hamlet* makes use of a “shrill [...], bitter,”<sup>141</sup> and “harsh” (herb)<sup>142</sup> sonority – the augmented triad. As a dissonance in theory treatises of the early 1850s it indeed stood in the shadow of other dissonances and was little used for its own sake. More often than not it appeared in “passing.”<sup>143</sup> A. B. Marx’s remark in the *Allgemeine Musiklehre* reveals a rather degrading and not uncommon attitude: “If we raise the fifth of the major triad, the augmented triad yells at us glaringly; a succession of such chords has not been dared, at least not yet, – and would, indeed, be difficult to

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<sup>139</sup> Martin Wehnert, “Imagination und thematisches Verständnis bei Liszt - dargestellt am ‘Hamlet,’” in *Bericht über die wissenschaftliche Konferenz Das Weimarer Schaffen Franz Liszt’s und seine Ausstrahlung auf die Weltmusikultur*, ed. Uta Eckhardt, Wolfram Huschke and Wolfgang Marggraf (Weimar: 1987), 38.

<sup>140</sup> See fn. 156 in this chapter.

<sup>141</sup> *Allgemeine Musiklehre*: Ein Hilfsbuch, 4th edn. (Leipzig, 1850), 322. Cited in R. Larry Todd, “The ‘Unwelcome Guest’ Regaled: Franz Liszt and the Augmented Triad,” *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* 12 (1988-1989): 93.

<sup>142</sup> Weitzmann, *Der Uebermaessige Dreiklang*, 1.

<sup>143</sup> R. Larry Todd, “Franz Liszt, Carl Weitzmann, and the Augmented Triad,” 155.

motivate.”<sup>144</sup> A. B. Marx did not know then that in 1853 a young theorist from Berlin, Carl Friedrich Weitzmann, would publish a whole treatise on this sonority and its “Mehrdeutigkeit,”<sup>145</sup> highlighting its symmetry and similarity to the diminished triad as well as explaining ways of preparing the chord and myriad possibilities for resolving it.<sup>146</sup> Moreover, as R. Larry Todd and Constantin Floros have pointed out,<sup>147</sup> this first theory of the augmented triad appeared one year before a major composition exploiting it was written - the *Faust* Symphony (composed between August and October 1854, a final section, the *Chorus Mysticus*, was added in 1857<sup>148</sup>), in which the augmented triad appeared shockingly emancipated. Which came first – theory or practice – is difficult to discern because the theme of the first movement of the symphony, the “Faust” movement, which features the augmented triad, as noted by Humphrey Searle, already

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>145</sup> Weitzmann, *Der Uebermaessige Dreiklang*, 13-15.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>147</sup> R. Larry Todd, “Franz Liszt, Carl Weitzmann, and the Augmented Triad,” 155; Constantin Floros, “Die Faust-Symphonie von Franz Liszt: Eine semantische Analyse,” in *Musik-Konzepte* 12: *Franz Liszt*, ed. Heinz-Klaus Metzger und Rainer Riehn (München: Edition Text und Kritik, 1980), 60.

<sup>148</sup> Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 103.

appears in Liszt's sketches of the mid-1840s.<sup>149</sup> And even earlier, in the 1830s, Liszt had used the augmented triad in *Lyon*, originally part of *Album d'un voyageur*.<sup>150</sup> As R. Larry Todd observed, even pieces like *Lyon*, where the augmented triad is laid out horizontally, indicate more than a fascination with "Mediantik."<sup>151</sup> In short, the augmented triad used not as passing chord but as independent sonority was still seen as extraordinary in the 1850s.

In Liszt's symphonic poem *Hamlet*, the augmented triad appears in four different forms: I) c-e-g-sharp, II) d-flat-f-a, III) d-f-sharp-a-sharp and IV) e-flat -g-b. Augmented triads I and II (and to a lesser degree IV) tend to occur during the introduction as "transitory" sonorities, while triads III and IV occur more conspicuously, also in the introduction, to bridge over large harmonic distances. One of the striking appearances of the sonority in the slow introduction occurs in a foreboding *pianissimo* passage with tremoli in the basses (Ex. 42-44):

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<sup>149</sup> Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (London: 1954), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: 1966), 68. Cited in Constantin Floros, "Die Faust-Symphonie von Franz Liszt: Eine Semantische Analyse," 42.

<sup>150</sup> R. Larry Todd, "The 'Unwelcome Guest' Regaled: Franz Liszt and the Augmented Triad," 96.

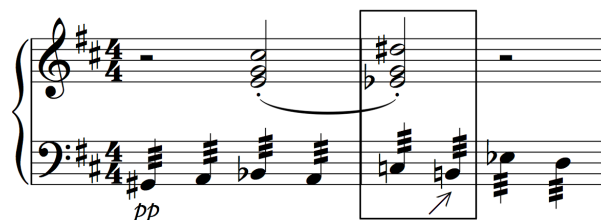
<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.





Aug. II (a, c-sharp, f)

**Example 42, Liszt, *Hamlet*, m. 51, Augmented Triad II**



Aug. IV (b, e-flat, g)

**Example 43, Liszt, *Hamlet*, m. 56, Augmented Triad IV**



Aug. I (g-sharp, c, e)

Aug. I (g-sharp, c, e)

**Example 44, Liszt, *Hamlet*, m. 64 Augmented Triad I**

Specifying the bass tremoli as “very smooth and ghostly” (“die Tremolos in den Bässen [als] sehr dicht und schaurig”), Liszt may be evoking the ghost here. The augmented triads are barely discernable but add a mysterious flavor to this section, even as they move in a transitory manner, alternating, by a half-step motion, with minor triads (or their enharmonic equivalent).

The augmented triads III and IV make a more noteworthy appearance, also in the introduction, and seem to have caused Hans von Bülow to remark about this symphonic

poem's "lovely shifts" ("schöne Wendungen").<sup>152</sup> They seem to serve the purpose of linking rather distant keys, which results in a harmonic "swaying" between different worlds. The four phrases<sup>153</sup> from mm. 9-26 show how Liszt moves seemingly effortlessly between C minor and G-sharp minor (Ex. 45-47), and E-flat minor and B minor (Ex. 48-50).

Aug. IV → C minor

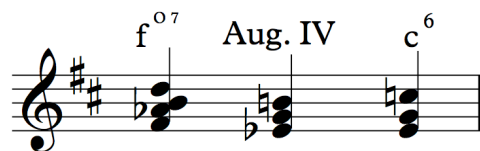
Aug. IV → G-sharp minor

**Example 45, Liszt, *Hamlet* (mm. 9-12)**

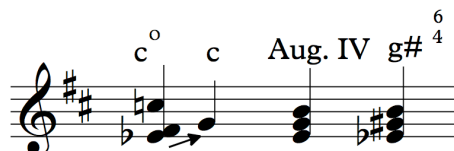
The phrase that incorporates the significant harmonic shifts (Ex. 45) contains two noteworthy instances of the augmented triad (Exx. 46 and 47) in which Liszt moves from a diminished chord to C minor and from C minor to G-sharp minor, both times making use of the Aug. IV as a shifting device.

<sup>152</sup> Hans von Bülow, *Briefe und Schriften*, III:418, letter to Felix Draeseke of August 31, 1861.

<sup>153</sup> The term "phrase" is used to denote units larger than the motive but distinct from the main themes.

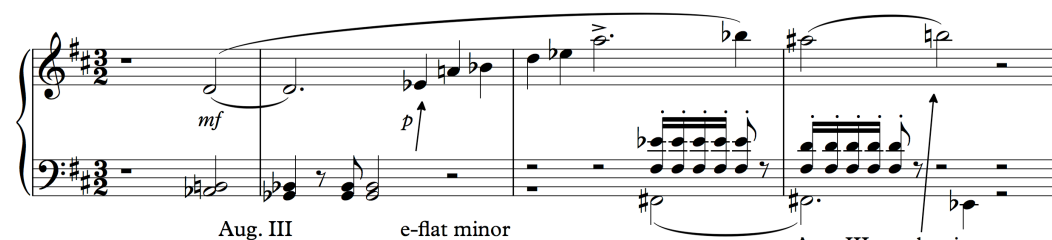


Example 46, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction  
(mm. 9-10)



Example 47, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction  
(mm. 11-12)

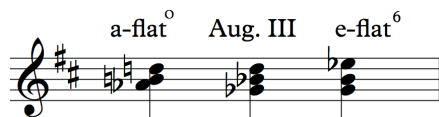
The phrase seen in mm. 17-20 is a sequential repetition of that in Ex. 45 and features triad III and resolutions to two different, unrelated keys:



Example 48, Liszt, *Hamlet* (mm. 17-20)

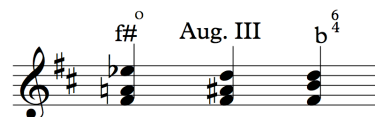
This second ascending line (Ex. 48) again contains two significant harmonic shifts, to E-flat minor (Ex. 49) and B minor (Ex. 50), which expose the enigmatic augmented triad:

a-flat° Aug. III e-flat°



Example 49, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction  
(mm. 17-18)

f#° Aug. III b°



Example 50, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction  
(mm. 19-20)

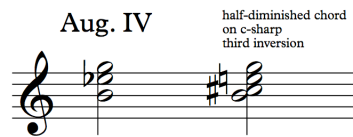
These six examples demonstrate the “Mehrdeutigkeit,” the astonishing versatility, of the augmented triad to span over large harmonic distances and to connect two remote harmonies. Each of the two larger phrases (Ex. 45 and Ex. 48) show harmonic shifts between minor keys that are a minor sixth apart, spread out over two-

measure intervals, which are linked through the augmented triad. As can be seen in Exx. 45-47 and Exx. 48-50, the augmented triad shares two common tones with the harmony to which it resolves by step (C and G-sharp minor and E $\flat$  and B minor, respectively). Another example, here using the augmented triad horizontally, appears at the very opening of the symphonic poem (Ex. 51).

**Example 51, Liszt, *Hamlet*, First Opening Phrase (mm. 1-4)**

The muted horns, playing “sehr langsam und düster” with the performance direction “schwankend” (swaying), give the listener a sense of ambiguity from the first measures. Liszt uses the horizontal augmented triad IV (g-b-e-flat) to bridge the harmonic distance between a diatonic chord – C minor in second inversion – to an inverted half-diminished chord on c $\sharp$  by retaining two (implied) common tones to both chords on either side:

**Example 52, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction (m. 1)**



**Example 53, Liszt, *Hamlet*, Reduction (mm. 1-2)**

While the first example (Ex. 52) shows the relationship of the augmented triad to one of its three major-key “close relatives,” C minor, the second example (Ex. 53) shows a different progression, from the augmented triad to a half-diminished seventh chord on c# (in third inversion), which comes to a halt on the second chord in m. 2 on a c# diminished-seventh chord (Ex. 53). Weitzmann also accounted for this progression in a chapter of his treatise called “Evasions and Transitions Facilitated by the Augmented Triad” (“Ausweichungen und Übergänge, vermittelt durch den übermässigen Dreiklang”). Here Weitzmann lists a rather similar progression (Ex. 54), which may have inspired Liszt, going from a minor chord in first inversion to a diminished-seventh chord.



**Example 54, Weitzmann, *Der Uebermaessige Dreiklang* (1853)**

Liszt’s progression differs from Weitzmann’s examples only in its use of the half-diminished chord on c# which “resolves” to the diminished-seventh chord. Let us pause briefly and examine the most common progression of augmented triads and their

resolution to a diatonic chord by retaining two common tones, an operation explored in Carl Weitzmann's treatise of 1853 and described as a progression to a "close family member," which differs from "progressions to distant family members," in which only one common tone is retained. Taking together all the close and distant key relationships of each augmented triad, we arrive at the impressive number of twelve keys, six minor and six major keys, to which each augmented triad can progress. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the relationship of the augmented triad to its six "distant family" members, let us briefly examine, in the case of augmented triad IV, what Weitzmann calls the progressions to "close family members" (below Exx. 55-60), in order to understand how smoothly – through two common tones and stepwise movement – Liszt bridges two rather distant harmonies by using this versatile sonority (Liszt's examples, see Exx. 45-50 above). Weitzmann explains that in order to resolve the augmented triad into one of the three (closely related) major keys, the "Nebenton" (i.e. the minor sixth) drops a half-step.<sup>154</sup> To resolve the augmented triad into one of the three (closely related) minor keys, the "Nebenton" (the major seventh) is raised by a half-step.

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<sup>154</sup> Weitzmann constructs his operation through the use of a "supplementary tone" or "Nebenton" (a pitch outside of the respective scale), which in the major keys is the minor sixth whereas in the minor keys it is the major seventh of the Resolving harmony.





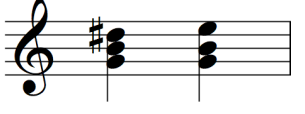
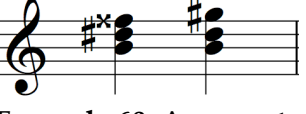
 <p>Example 55, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to E-flat major</p>	 <p>Example 56, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to G major</p>	 <p>Example 57, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to B major</p>
 <p>Example 58, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to C minor</p>	 <p>Example 59, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to E minor</p>	 <p>Example 60, Augmented Triad IV Resolving to G-sharp minor</p>

Figure 3, Weitzmann, the Augmented Triad IV (E-flat-G-B) Resolving to Its Six Close Family Members by Step

It becomes apparent that the augmented triad, by sharing with its close family members two common tones, can move to six different resolving harmonies by changing just one pitch. Seen from a larger perspective, this use of the augmented triad in Liszt's *Hamlet*, even in the more conspicuous presentation where it bridges over large distances, it is still much more subtle than in Liszt's *Faust* Symphony (Ex. 61), where the sonority opens the movement in an emancipated and unprecedented way:

**Example 61, Liszt, *Faust* Symphony, “Faust” Movement (mm. 1-4)**

In *Hamlet*, Liszt seems to aim for other ends. Perhaps he resorted to a more subtle exposure of the augmented triad to depict Hamlet’s nuances of indecision.<sup>155</sup> The two important presentations of the augmented triad in the introduction – the opening phrase (and its sequence) as well as the harmonic bridging of distant harmonies in mm. 9 ff have been related to Hamlet programmatically, but the literature has not stressed that this specific sonority can be seen as a harmonic representation of indecision – like a character sketch with a psychological focus revealing the inner workings – through its unique manner of “bridging” between two distant harmonic poles, just as Hamlet is

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<sup>155</sup> Mm. 105-119 are usually characterized as the Hamlet theme proper. Here Liszt does not feature the augmented triad but resorts to other harmonic means to suggest Hamlet’s indecision. The passage begins in a stable B minor (mm. 105-109) but then explores harmonic shifts, in one-measure intervals, between A minor and B minor (mm. 110-119). This harmonic scheme then undergoes sequential treatment in mm. 120-132, beginning with a stable D minor and exploring, in the following, shifts between D minor and C minor.



caught between the two poles of action and inaction in his eternal problem of

“Reflexion.”<sup>156</sup>

Let us restate the question whether this symphonic poem could be read as a narrative or rather as a character sketch. While some scholars have made a case for a detailed narrative in which the opening would represent Hamlet’s soliloquy with the famous phrase “To be or not to be”, others have hinted at more vague programmatic connections, implying that Liszt evoked not a scenic narrative but Hamlet’s character from a more psychological perspective. Taking one Liszt scholar’s comment that “the *Faust* movement is, to be sure, chiefly a picture, but also a trajectory” (“der ‘Faust’-Satz ist zwar vor allem Bild, aber er ist auch Ablauf”)<sup>157</sup> Taking the augmented triad in *Hamlet*

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<sup>156</sup> Lina Ramann, Kenneth Hamilton, Christian Martin Schmidt, Joanne Deere, and others have tied Liszt’s first opening to Hamlet’s phrase “To be or not to be,” “the rhythm of which it fits perfectly.” See Kenneth Hamilton, “Liszt,” 150; also Lina Ramann, *Franz Liszt als Künstler und Mensch*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1894), II:292-299; Christian Martin Schmidt, “Die ‘Aufhebung’ der Symphonie Beethovens in Liszts symphonischer Dichtung,” 531; Joanne Deere, “Form and Programme in Liszt’s *Hamlet*: A New Perspective” (master’s thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009), 49-52. While recent work by Kenneth Hamilton has made a case for *Hamlet* “evoking crucial scenes from the play in detail” (“Liszt,” 145) older works, such as by Frederick Niecks, interpreted Liszt’s *Hamlet* as a more general character study, see Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the last four Centuries* (London: Novello, 1906), 303: Liszt portrays the “brooding prince – not the story of his life, not even his whole character, only a dominating feature.” Other programmatic studies, such as Edward Murphy’s “A Detailed Programme for Liszt’s ‘Hamlet’” (*Journal of the American Liszt Society* 29 [January-June 1991]: 47-60) have been criticized for evoking an amount of programmatic detail, such as the portraying of Gertrude, Laertes, and Claudius, which, according to Hamilton, 161, “seems to have no source other than the author’s own overly fertile imagination.”

to hint at a character sketch – although more subtle than in the *Faust* Symphony – seems to suggest at least as much “Bild” as “Ablauf” or narrative.

As an extraordinary, provocative harmony, which in those days still existed in the shadows of the “long familiar” (“bei uns längst heimischen”)<sup>158</sup> diminished-seventh chord and other more assimilated dissonances, the augmented triad can signify in powerful and telling ways the complex psychology of Hamlet. While Liszt makes sure to invoke the ironic side of Hamlet’s character at two instances in the piece – the Hamlet theme proper (mm. 105) and in the middle of the piece (mm. 176 ff.), where List suffuses the music with dotted rhythms and rests, and tellingly adds that the passage is to be played “ironisch” – it would be a mistake to think that we meet here a Hamlet who has overcome his issue of “Reflexion” and inaction.

Although Liszt is clearly deviating from the Goethean *Hamlet* interpretation common earlier in the century – which saw Hamlet as weak, “crushed beneath the weight of his role”<sup>159</sup> – it would seem that the augmented triad shows an inner

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<sup>157</sup> Gernot Gruber, “Zum Formproblem in Liszt’s Orchesterwerken – exemplifiziert am ersten Satz der *Faust*-Symphony,” in *Kongressbericht Eisenstadt 1975*, ed. Wolfgang Suppan (Graz, 1977), 93.

<sup>158</sup> Weitzmann, *Der Uebermaessige Dreiklang*, 2.

<sup>159</sup> Letter No. 42 from Liszt to Agnes Street-Klindworth, January 18, 1856, in *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth*, ed. Michael Saffle (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2000), 81.

deterioration, a psychological “Zerrissenheit” that implies not heroic strength but rather a weak, indecisive, mind. Even if Liszt portrays Hamlet as active and politically ambitious (owing in part to performances Liszt saw by the actor Bogumil Dawison<sup>160</sup>) rather than as a weak Goethean hero (or “schwächlich-weibische Held,”<sup>161</sup> as Goethe’s heroes were dismissed to in a derogatory sense since the 1830s), Liszt’s use of the augmented triad as an emblem of Hamlet’s swaying has strong musical, and therefore programmatic implications.

By using the versatile augmented triad’s ability to bridge over two (dichotomous) harmonic ends, the two diametrical poles of Hamlet’s mind, between which he is constantly trapped without the ability to act, come into focus. Thus Hamlet’s

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<sup>160</sup> Dawison inspired Liszt, it seems, in 1856 to portray Hamlet in this active, political, ironic manner. Even though Liszt revised his view slightly in 1858, Dawison’s impact on Liszt’s portrayal of Hamlet’s character, can still be heard. See Letter No. 42 from Liszt to Agnes Street-Klindworth, January 18, 1856, in *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth*, 81-83; and letter No. 79, also to Agnes Street-Klindworth, June 26, 1858, in *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth*, 152-153. Here, Liszt says: “I am not displeased with him [Hamlet] – he will stay as he is, wan, feverish, hovering between heaven and earth – the captive of his doubt and irresolution.” But already Schlegel had stressed a shade of Hamlet’s irony, or “Schadenfreude,” in the “Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur” (248-250), where he says: “... he has a natural disposition to follow crooked paths; nevertheless one understandably senses in him a malicious joy.” (“... er hat einen natürlichen Hang dazu, krumme Wege zu gehen [“krumme Wege” can stand for the augmented triad harmonically] dagegen spürt man unleugbar in ihm eine tückische Schadenfreude.”)

<sup>161</sup> Mandelkow, 103.

portrayal in *Hamlet* could indeed be compared to a psychological character sketch promoted by the augmented triad, albeit more subtly than in the “Faust” movement. As Liszt had described in detail in his famous essay “Berlioz und seine ‘Harold-Symphonie’” (1855), where he compared his programmatic vision for the symphonic poem to the genre of “Philosophische Epopöe,”<sup>162</sup> his goal was “no longer depicting the deeds of the hero, but representing the affects that reign in his soul. What counts more is to show how the hero thinks than how he behaves.”<sup>163</sup>

If the augmented triad serves to carve out an unprecedented psychological trait of Hamlet, we should also mention, albeit briefly, that Liszt’s presentation of Ophelia is rather novel. Liszt indicates in his score that the secondary theme is to be performed “as if a shadowy image pointing to Ophelia.” (“Wie ein Schattenbild auf Ophelia hindeutend.”) And indeed, Liszt stresses not her beauty in a Goethean, idealistic, musically symmetrical or melodious sense but presents her in “snatches of song,” broken phrases, evoking this response from Peter Raabe: “Had Liszt placed a lovely songful theme against the comfortless, brooding motives with which he begins, so everyone who could enjoy his music only when imagining the plot at once, would have

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<sup>162</sup> Franz Liszt, *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV:53.

<sup>163</sup> “Nicht mehr die Darstellung von Thaten des Helden, sondern die Darstellung von Affekten, die in seiner Seele walten. Es gilt weit mehr zu zeigen, wie der Held denkt, als wie er sich benimmt.” *Ibid.*, 54.

immediately thought of Ophelia. But that the female protagonist of such a drama is only hinted at in a progression of tones, which pass by in their pale and colorless simplicity [...], this, in fact, nobody could understand.”<sup>164</sup>

Liszt seems to resort to rather different means to portray his Hamlet than Joachim, by using the “geheimnisvolle [...] herbe” augmented triad to depict Hamlet’s reflection or, as Liszt described it in a letter to Street-Klindworth in 1858, Hamlet’s “hovering between heaven and earth.”<sup>165</sup> Joachim, on the other hand, largely expresses his programmaticism through manipulating a Beethovenian sonata form – which some of his contemporaries viewed as “overwrought” (“überwunden”) – but through which he conveys, if by more conventional means, an interpretation of Hamlet’s indecision. His programmatic approach – less specific than Liszt’s – describes a course similar to how Dahlhaus has analyzed Beethoven’s *Les Adieux* Sonata: content becomes form.<sup>166</sup> Even literally, Joachim’s indebtedness to Beethoven cannot be overlooked when he says that

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<sup>164</sup> “Hätte Liszt in seinem ‘Hamlet’ den trostlosen grüblerischen motiven, mit denen er beginnt, ein schönes gesangvolles Thema gegenüber gestellt, so hätten alle, die seine Musik nur zu genießen vermochten, wenn sie sich eine Handlung dabei vorstellten, sofort an Ophelia gedacht. Aber dass die weibliche Hauptgestalt eines solchen Dramas nur durch ein paar Tonfolgen angedeutet wurde, die in ihrer blassen, fast farblosen Einfachheit vorübergleiten [...] das konnte niemand verstehen.” Peter Raabe, *Liszt’s Schaffen*, 2 vols. (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1968), II:99-101.

<sup>165</sup> Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth, 152-153.

<sup>166</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Beethoven* (Laaber: Laaber, 1987), 60.

“Beethoven ist der musikalische Shakespeare,”<sup>167</sup> an identification Joachim allies with his own overture by insinuating into the music some cues from *Egmont* and *Coriolan*. Other works by Beethoven could be cited as well. But unlike Liszt, Joachim avoided supplying any titles, explanations, printed programs, or prefaces. Returning to the question of Joachim’s “Zerrissenheit,” which persisted on the musical level (between new and old, absolute music and program music), his German and Hungarian identities, his Christian and Jewish faiths, and his occupation,<sup>168</sup> let us ask what may have fostered such deep “Zerrissenheit”?

After the failed 1848 revolution and the widespread melancholy and political urgency to move forward it became increasingly difficult for Joachim to be oriented backwards, as manifest in his classical orientation and use of sonata form. As in Schumann’s music of the late period, misunderstood for its subjectivity and labeled as retrospective, Joachim’s allegiance to the classical masters must have seemed out of step not least because of the political urgency of the time. After the 1848 “Scheitelpunkt,” the

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<sup>167</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:47, letter to Woldemar Bargiel, April 7, 1853.

<sup>168</sup> “It also happens that I always vacillate between longing to be a virtuoso, conductor, and composer; and therefore, in making preparations and coming to decisions, I often do not get down to real work, like a housewife who, out of mania for cleaning never arrives at a tidy, comfortable family life – but a spoiled child ‘unter den Zelten’ [i.e. Gisela’s address in Berlin] would know nothing of such hardworking, diligent artisan souls [...]” Eshbach, “Joachim’s Youth – Joachim’s Jewishness,” 571.

misery of the present was viewed as a byproduct of romanticism and unbridled subjectivity, all combined together in the key concept of “Rückzug in die Innerlichkeit” (“retreat into inwardness”), which prohibited movement forward. As another option, Gervinus and others advocated a world view tinged with realism, which would lead Germany out of its powerless lethargy and melancholy.<sup>169</sup>

Through the analogy of Joachim’s orientation backward *vis-à-vis* the German political situation as described by Gervinus – and significantly symbolized by the character of Hamlet – we can understand one layer of Joachim’s “Zerrissenheit”: his entrapment between the past – manifested in his Beethoven-nostalgia – and the dark melancholic present. That the German cultural-political climate offers one important source of Joachim’s “Zerrissenheit” has been underestimated in Joachim scholarship (although the puzzling question why he quit composing remains mysterious) and mentioned only in passing.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> “The political seriousness of the present has struck to the ground the romantic world view.” (“Der politische Ernst der Gegenwart hat die romantische Weltansicht zu Boden geschlagen.”) August Kahlert, “Über den Begriff von Klassischer und Romantischer Musik” *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 50, No 18 (1848): 295, cited in Tadday, “Zum Wandel des Schumannbildes,” 327.

<sup>170</sup> Borchard, 128. Other levels of his complex identity – such as between Judaism and Christianity, and German and Hungarian ethnicity – are no doubt important and have been discussed elsewhere. See Borchard and Heidy Zimmermann, eds., *Musikwelten-Lebenswelten. Jüdische Identitätssuche in der deutschen Musikkultur* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009).

What Gervinus's reading of *Hamlet*, including the famous phrase "Deutschland ist Hamlet," reveals to us is the condition of German culture at 1852. From this perspective we can understand why Joachim's nostalgia for Beethoven was problematic and perhaps one reason for his "Zerrissenheit" as a composer. The course of the future was equally pressing for Gervinus and for German composers, for there was no room for being "trapped" in the past. As Tadday insists, the early 1850s were a "broken" time with no space for dreams and subjective expression: "There is no more time to be lost in dreams, for to fully validate law and order everywhere, that is the motto, after men like Gervinus und Ruge for ten years have demonstrated that romanticism had broken the political strength of the German nation."<sup>171</sup> Especially after the failed revolutionary years of 1848-49, the vertex of the departure of romanticism, as Tadday notes, the melancholic tenor of the times and "politische Ernst der Gegenwart"<sup>172</sup> was continuously compared to Hamlet:

Melancholy is first of all determined everywhere in a purely empirical way, in Rückert and Raimund as well as in Heine, Grabbe und Büchner, and not only with the poets personally, but also with the figures they represent. *Hamlet*,

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<sup>171</sup> "Es ist nicht mehr Zeit, sich in Träume zu verlieren, denn Gesetz und Ordnung zur vollen Gültigkeit ueberall zu bringen, das ist die Losung, nachdem seit zehn Jahren Männer wie Gervinus und Ruge den Beweis geführt, dass die Romantik die politische Kraft der deutschen Nation gebrochen." Ulrich Tadday, "Zum Wandel des Schumannbildes," *Die Tonkunst: Magazin für klassische Musik und Musikwissenschaft* 4, No. 3 (2010): 327.

<sup>172</sup> August Kahlert, "Über den Begriff von Klassischer und Romantischer Musik," in *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 50, No. 18 (May 3, 1848): 289-295.



*Ahasver, Faust, Kain* appear in continually new forms, even if they bear other names. [. . .] But also common human society [was] demonic and torn asunder, [which is why] Gotthelf [called] world weariness [“Weltschmerz”] in *Anne Bäbi Jowäger* (1843/44) “the newest disease of all.”<sup>173</sup>

It is this culture – and by culture we mean a nation whose identity was about to transcend from being defined culturally to being defined politically in the next two decades leading up to 1871 – that preoccupied Gervinus, leading him to ask, which course the future of Germany would take, in the same manner as Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, and Joachim were asking – through and beyond their music – which course the future of music would take.

Liszt, as his work and his ideas suggest, saw the future in a new movement – the *New German school*, in which one aim, as one scholar has noted,<sup>174</sup> was to provide a sense of national musical unity missing on the national political level, a claim rather ambitious, if not aggressive. Providing, or at least claiming to provide, a national umbrella organization for music *of the future* must have seemed like a grotesquely large

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<sup>173</sup> “Die Melancholie ist zunächst überall rein empirisch festzustellen, bei Rückert und Raimund so gut wie bei Heine, Grabbe und Büchner [*Dantons Tod* (1835)], und nicht nur bei den Dichtern persönlich, sondern auch bei den Gestalten, die sie darstellen. *Hamlet, Ahasver, Faust, [...] Kain* erscheinen in immer erneuter Gestalt, auch wenn sie andere Namen tragen; [...] sondern auch die gewöhnlichen Gesellschaftsmenschen [waren] dämonisch und zerissen [...] [weshalb] [...] Gotthelf in *Anne Bäbi Jowäger* (1843/44) den Weltschmerz ‘die allerneuste Krankheit nennt.’” Sengle, I:2.

<sup>174</sup> Schröder, *Monumentale Erinnerung – ästhetische Erinnerung: Beethovenrezeption und die Ästhetik der Intermedialität in den Schriften der Neudeutschen Schule*, 21.

statement, somewhat analogous to providing or claiming to provide a national political identity for a whole nation, which still based its identity so heavily on culture (let alone the issue that Liszt and other New Germans were not even German).<sup>175</sup>

What did Joachim envision as the ideal path of music in the future? This is more difficult to answer, precisely because Joachim's identity seems so complex and dichotomous, not readily admitting a one-dimensional response, which has inspired several studies about his "Identitätsfindung."<sup>176</sup> While he was in the early 1850s viewed as a New-German composer from the outside, he did not seem to have identified with the New German School and the Lisztian path<sup>177</sup> but rather got caught up in an effort to defend a tradition-laden past, expressed musically in his use of classical principles.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Schröder, 21.

<sup>176</sup> Borchard, 129, mentions the important concept of "Identitätsfindung über Abspaltung." Also Robert Eshbach discusses Joachim's identity from various perspectives; see Eshbach, "Joachim's Youth – Joachim's Jewishness," 564.

<sup>177</sup> Even if he could not identify with the New German school, his contemporaries certainly saw in his music New German influences, which they expressed by commenting on his "herbe Harmonie und grelle Klangfarben" (*Niederrheinische Musikzeitung* 2, No. 3 (1854) and by comparing his *Hamlet* Overture "with that of *Tannhäuser* a few years ago" (Review of the last *Abonnement Concert* in the Gewandhaus, Leipzig, 1854). Another reviewer maintained that Joachim's "close connection to drama is more a hindrance to the composer, and [he] would prefer that he once seized his inner self and created freely and unhindered from himself" ("enge Anschließen an das Drama dem Componisten mehr hinderlich ist und [er] möchte wohl, dass er einmal in sein inneres griffe und aus sich selbst heraus frei und ungehindert schaffte"). See the review "Aus Hannover," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 43, No. 5 (July 27, 1855).

Joachim's aesthetic begs the question what would have been the course of Joachim's compositional path, had Schumann not died so young.

However, there is a contradiction at work here because Joachim's answer to the question about the future of music is only one part of his answer, just as his programmatic interpretation of Hamlet's "Reflexion" is not his complete answer to the question of Hamlet, which has also other, subtler, deeper layers. Just as his overture represents deeper levels of Hamlet's psyche with certain unique stylistic features, a second look at his music suggests that Joachim, while pointing to the past, is nevertheless offering a fascinating musical document that betrays its origin in the early 1850s. Among these signifiers, which situate him squarely in his own time, is his choice of *Hamlet* in the first place, the dark pessimism in his overture, and his motivic idiosyncrasies, which emphasize Hamlet's "trapped" situation, and, with other works of Joachim, help to define *Psychologische Musik*.

First of all, Joachim's turn to *Hamlet* in a time when Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was all over the literary map of Germany is significant, and even more so considering that close to no significant musical adaptations – and surely no recent musical precedent – existed. Shakespeare's affinity to early realism is expressed in many places – "Shakespeare calls

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<sup>178</sup> Borchard, 133.

for overwhelming realness in his world”<sup>179</sup> – and contrasted with key ideas of the idealist aesthetic of Weimar classicism, which, as Gervinus pointed out, had caused widespread objection at mid-century, the nadir of Goethe reception. Under these circumstances the turn to Shakespeare was a significant step, which the Joachim literature has not fully recognized. The pessimism in Joachim’s music, furthermore, seems to mirror the post-1848 atmosphere and was noted not only by Schumann, who implied that Joachim should refrain from composing “too much mourning coat” (“zu viel Trauermantel”),<sup>180</sup> but also evinced a remarkable response from Gisela, written in a beautifully frank letter to the American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson:

Joseph Joachim is a fiery musician totally pierced through by Beethoven – with the first stroke of his violin bow he would take your heart forever, he plays Beethoven as if he lived through him, no one can do it in a similar way. His tone possesses a force, a strength and yet such an inner warmth, that it’s as if one were wounded in the heart by a real hero and at the same time the heavenly oil of the best Samaritan healed it together with a soft glow. He is not dexterous or brilliant in speech, but his silent motions are captivating, evoking affection – if he only enters a room one feels he is great and good and where he goes and stands penetrated by the deepest [thought]. His compositions are marvelous – still young, but bitter, too dark (for a sad youthful destiny has heavily oppressed him), but the finest wine.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Paulin, 447.

<sup>180</sup> Friedrich Kerst, *Schumann-Brevier* (Leipzig, Berlin: Schuster und Löffler, 1905), 162, letter to Joachim of February 6, 1854; Moser, *Joseph Joachim: ein Lebensbild*, I:205.

<sup>181</sup> Cited in Eshbach, “Joachim’s Youth – Joachim’s Jewishness,” 435: “Joseph Joachim ein feuriger Musiker ganz durchdrungen von Bethoven [*sic*], – würde ihr Herz mit dem ersten Bogenstrich seiner Violine für immer einnehmen, er spielt Bethoven so als hätte er ihn durchlebt, es kann es

Furthermore, Joachim's use of "trapped" motives betrays a certain psychological intensity. The motives pervade his music in ways distinct from Schumann and Beethoven and offer a powerful tool for depicting the dilemma of Hamlet, whose inaction is a consequence of his mental entrapment. The frustrated musical gestures, expressed motivically and harmonically, as discussed above, can be seen as a counterpart to Gervinus's new method of *Hamlet* exegesis. They show Joachim's effort at "drawing" a psychological portrayal of Hamlet's soul ["eine Seele [zu] zeichnen"], and thus engage the aesthetic of the early 1850s – still romantic, but not quite yet realist – which is patently current and not retrospective.

On another level, the "trapped" motives suggest how we can understand Joachim's statement that his compositions of the early 1850s offered him an outlet for his intense emotions about Gisela, an approach which, as Sir Donald Francis Tovey tells

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niemand in gleicher Weise. Es liegt eine Kraft eine Gewalt und doch eine so innige Wärme in seinem Ton, das es einem ist als bekäme man von einem rechten Helden so eine Wunde mitten ins Herz, und zugleich heilte es das himmlische Öl des besten Samariters mit sanfter Gluth zusammen. Er spricht nicht gewandt und geistreich, aber seine stumme Bewegung reißt zur Liebe hin – wenn er nur ins Zimmer tritt fühlt man er ist groß und gut und wo er geht und steht vom Tiefsten durchdrungen. Seine Compositionen sind herrlich – noch jung noch herb, – zu dunkel (denn ein trauriges Jugendschicksal hat ihn schwehr bedrückt) aber der edelste Wein." Letter from Gisela von Arnim to Ralph Waldo Emerson of December 9, 1858.

us,<sup>182</sup> Joachim referred to as *Psychologische Musik*. In his focus on the psychological layers of Hamlet we can also detect a similarity to Liszt's symphonic poem. And taking the *Hamlet* discussions of Goethe, Schlegel and Gans, the focus of which was Hamlet's "Reflexion," we could argue that both Liszt and Joachim, in their own and rather distinct ways, followed a similar approach as did Gervinus, going beyond the traditional focus on Hamlet's "Reflexion" to unlock deeper realms with a heightened focus on Hamlet's psyche.

To summarize, let us emphasize that what attracted Gervinus to *Hamlet* was the same cultural condition that attracted Joachim to the play and led to his overture, strikingly composed with almost no significant musical precedent.<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, the literary and cultural climate that intensified Gervinus's focus on psychological layers in his *Hamlet* exegesis is the same as that, which encouraged Joachim to focus on the psychological in *Hamlet*. If Gervinus reacted to older methodologies applied by earlier Shakespeare analysts such as Goethe and Schlegel, Joachim in certain ways reacted to the musical past, including Beethoven, so that his overture was a product of the present, as his music in unmistakably clear ways suggests.

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<sup>182</sup> Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 320.

<sup>183</sup> I have, as of yet, been unable to examine the one exception, Hermann Hirschbach's *Hamlet Overture* (1839).

We return at the end to Schumann, with whom we began by citing an article on the “unmusicality” of *Hamlet* published in his *NZfM*. What it meant to write *Zukunftsmusik* in the early 1850s was, no doubt, pondered by Schumann as much as by Liszt and Joachim, especially to the question of determining, which music would carry forward into the future. When Schumann wrote his article “Neue Bahnen,” in which he hailed Brahms as the new messianic musical figure, Schumann was not and could not be fully aware of where the New German school was headed during the next decade, and yet, as Martin Geck implies,<sup>184</sup> he foresaw some central music-historical developments. By associating Brahms with *neue Bahnen*, Schumann threw into the discussion a rather exotic proposition, namely, that the new paths would support symphonies, sonatas, and quartets,<sup>185</sup> and by someone like Brahms.<sup>186</sup> Although the full extent of Brahms's work was far from visible in 1853, it was clear already that Schumann represented a singular view, in dissonance with the dominating attitudes held by his contemporaries and

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<sup>184</sup> Martin Geck, “‘Haben Sie sich wohl überlegt, was Sie geschrieben haben?’ Robert Schumann und Richard Pohl als Kontrahenten im Diskurs über eine ‘neudeutsche’ Musikästhetik,” in *Musik Konzepte Sonderband, Der Späte Schumann* (München: Edition Text und Kritik, 2006), 28.

<sup>185</sup> Robert Schumann, *Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, 176.

<sup>186</sup> Geck, 26-28.

expressed through Schumann's former – and now Franz Brendel's – *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.<sup>187</sup>

Also mentioned in "Neue Bahnen,"<sup>188</sup> albeit in a footnote, was Joseph Joachim and his importance as a composer of this time, a point rarely made despite its significance. Schumann, who knew Joachim's work intimately, was implying here that the music of the future, the *Neue Bahnen*, would continue certain compositional parameters of the kind that Liszt and company judged "überwunden" (overcome) as demonstrated in Bach, Händel, and Beethoven<sup>189</sup> rather than break with the compositional parameters of the past, as envisioned in Liszt's symphonic poem (a genre not yet defined or in use in 1853<sup>190</sup>) and Wagner's music drama. The following letter reveals that according to Schumann, the music of the future might very well be found in the music of Joachim. Schumann wrote in 1854 in response to Richard Pohl, who, disguised under his pseudonym "Hoplit," had criticized Schumann's work as being

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 26-28.

<sup>188</sup> Robert Schumann, *Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, 175; *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 39 (October 1853), 185-186.

<sup>189</sup> Richard Pohl, "Das Karlsruher Musikfest im Oktober 1853" (Leipzig, 1853), 53; Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, II:5-45.

<sup>190</sup> "The term symphonic poem did not appear until April 1854, when *Tasso* was performed in Weimar under that rubric, until then Liszt referred to his orchestral works as overtures." See Kenneth Hamilton, "Liszt," 144.



subjective and outlived (“überholt”).<sup>191</sup> “That you were Hoplit, I didn’t know at all. For I don’t especially harmonize with his and his party’s enthusiasm for Liszt-Wagner. What you consider musicians of the future I regard as musicians of the present, and what you regard as musicians of the past (Bach, Handel, Beethoven), seem to me the best musicians of the future. Spiritual beauty in the most beautiful form I can never regard as outlived.”<sup>192</sup>

Thus, by invoking Beethoven's overtures and adhering to “überwundene” forms, Joachim actually realized what Schumann had merely prophesied – that the future of classical music and the continuation of Beethoven's legacy in the second half of the nineteenth century was not in the hands of *Zukunftsmusik* – but rather inextricably tied to *Vergangenheitsmusik*.

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<sup>191</sup> Richard Pohl, “Das Karlsruher Musikfest im Oktober 1853,” 53.

<sup>192</sup> “Dass Sie der Hoplit waren, das wusst’ ich gar nicht. Denn ich harmoniere nicht sonderlich mit seinem und seiner Partei Liszt-Wagner’schen Enthusiasmus. Was Sie für Zukunftsmusiker halten, das halt’ ich für Gegenwartsmusiker, und was Sie für Vergangenheitsmusiker (Bach, Händel, Beethoven), das scheinen mir die besten Zukunftsmusiker. Geistige Schönheit in schönster Form kann ich nie für einen ‘überwundenen Standpunkt’ halten [...]” Robert Schumann, “Ein unbekannter Brief von Robert Schumann,” *Die Musik* 5 (1905/1906): 111, letter to Richard Pohl of February 6, 1854, cited in Martin Geck, “‘Haben Sie sich wohl überlegt, was Sie geschrieben haben?’ Robert Schumann und Richard Pohl als Kontrahenten im Diskurs über eine ‘neudeutsche’ Musikästhetik,” 26-28.

### 3. The Psychology of a Pretender: Program and Autobiography in Joachim's Overture to Herman Grimm's *Demetrius* (1853-54)

Even more so than the *Hungarian* Violin Concerto (1857), Joachim's Overture to Herman Grimm's *Demetrius* (1853-54) elicited a revealing response from Sir Donald Francis Tovey, who offered the following words about this work: "Joachim showed me both the arrangement [by Brahms, 1856<sup>1</sup>] and the original score of the Overture to *Demetrius*, saying with glee, 'it's awful!—an attempt at psychological music!' [...] The psychology of it was good enough to prove that Joachim understood Liszt and his Weimar group of revolutionaries through and through before he renounced their ways."<sup>2</sup>

The music of *Demetrius* appears to reveal a battleground for a harmonic and motivic conflict of two dichotomies. As another idiosyncratically autobiographic work, Joachim's overture points to his conflict with Herman Grimm, which, as will be argued, the composer in effect mapped onto his overture. *Demetrius* resembles, like *Abendglocken* a "confession." Supporting this conclusion is a review of Joachim's letters during the

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<sup>1</sup> "Ouvertüre zu Herman Grimm's 'Demetrius' op. 6 von Joseph Joachim, Arrangement für zwei Klaviere zu vier Händen," in *Johannes Brahms Werke, Complete Edition Series IX, vol.1, Arrangements of Works by Other Composers for One or Two Pianos Four Hands*, ed. Valerie Woodring Goertzen (München: Henle, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 320.

period of composition, which lasted from the fall of 1853 to February 1854 (with revisions in September 1854) and a comparison of some details in the manuscripts of the first and second version of *Demetrius*. But unlike *Abendglocken*, whose program remains veiled – audible through Gisela’s cipher but not visible on the title page – the Overture to *Demetrius* is a traditional theatrical overture and carries an explicit programmatic title pointing to a historical figure, Demetrius, the pretender to the Russian throne, whose legitimacy is destroyed when he discovers the truth about his identity – he is not the heir but merely a “pretender” to the throne.

This chapter sheds light on the composer’s multi-leveled programmatic references in this overture, expressed through his unusually free formal and harmonic approaches, which require the analyst to investigate how he viewed a literary program, bringing us back to Tovey’s enigmatic opening remark. As in the previous two chapters, we shall turn again to mid-nineteenth-century music aesthetics. The main opposite targets of the war of the romantics were described as “form versus content, the oneness versus the separateness of the arts, newness versus oldness, revolution versus reaction,”<sup>3</sup> in short, “absolute music” versus “program music.” The separation, however, was not “absolute,” for, as Joachim’s oeuvre of the 1850s conveys with unmistakable clarity, a

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<sup>3</sup> Alan Walker, “The War of the Romantics,” in *Franz Liszt. The Weimar Years, 1848-1861* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 338 ff.

composer was not forced by default to take sides but, as in Joachim's case, could be caught right in the middle.

Being caught right in the middle pertains to his personal relationships to both sides of the future divide<sup>4</sup> but also stands for Joachim's highly individual approach to delivering a program, evident in his three programmatic overtures to *Hamlet* (1852-53), *Demetrius* (1853-54), and *Henry IV* (1854). On the one hand, Tovey and Spohr attest to Joachim having employed in his *Demetrius* Overture stereotypical New German aesthetic devices, namely explicitly programmatic cues and harsh dissonances. Tovey singled out "a passage in which a theme grew, by augmentation, to a gigantic size in a way vividly suggestive of the horror of the self-deceived imposter [Demetrius]," <sup>5</sup> while Spohr complained about "the ear-tearing harshness of the harmony" ("ohrenzerreißende" [...] Härten der Harmonie").<sup>6</sup> On the other hand Joachim tended to adhere to sonata form, notwithstanding his one experiment with the Lisztian "double-function form" in 1852.<sup>7</sup> Precisely in those cases where he diverged from sonata form,

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<sup>4</sup> Joachim was, in 1854, still on good terms with various composers associated with the New German movement, such as Richard Wagner, Hans von Bülow, Franz Liszt, and Hector Berlioz. This is evident from his letters at least until May 1854. See *Joachim Briefe*.

<sup>5</sup> Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 230.

<sup>6</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:281, letter from Spohr to Joachim of April 23, 1855.

<sup>7</sup> See Joachim, *Violinkonzert in einem Satze* Op. 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1854).

Joachim revealed how closely he adhered to it as an ideal. Diverging meant a lot: with his own idiosyncratic compositional style – rich in formal and motivic, as well as forthright programmatic allusions, Joachim composed his own kind of musical character sketch, offering in tones a depiction of “Seelenzustände,”<sup>8</sup> a term evoked by Liszt in his essay on Berlioz’ *Harold Symphony* (1855), but equally fitting for Joachim’s *Demetrius*, which Liszt knew and respected highly.<sup>9</sup> Liszt’s essay emphasizes the importance of relaxing strict sonata form in order to portray the depths of a literary character.<sup>10</sup> Not

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<sup>8</sup> Originally a term used by A. B. Marx.

<sup>9</sup> La Mara, ed., *Briefwechsel zwischen Franz Liszt und Hans von Bülow* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1898), 114, letter of November 27, 1854.

<sup>10</sup> Franz Liszt, *Gesammelte Schriften IV* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1882; reprint 1978), 69: “In so-called classical music the return and development of themes is determined by formal rules, which one regards as irrefutable, even though their composers possess no other regulation than their own fantasy, and they themselves encounter the formal arrangements that one now wants to represent as law. In program music on the other hand, motives return, change, metamorphose, and modulate according to their relation to poetic thoughts. Here a theme does not precipitate another from a formal law; here motives are not the consequence of stereotypical approximations or objects of tonal color, and the coloration as such does not require the grouping together of ideas. All exclusively musical perspectives are, though in no way left neglected, subordinated to the action of the given subject.” (“Bei der sogenannten klassischen Musik ist die Wiederkehr und thematische Entwicklung der Themen durch formelle Regeln bestimmt, die man als unumstößlich betrachtet, trotzdem ihre Komponisten keine andere Vorschrift für sie besaßen als ihre eigene Phantasie, und sie selbst die formellen Anordnungen trafen, die man jetzt als Gesetz aufstellen will. In der Programm-Musik dagegen ist Wiederkehr, Wechsel, Veränderung und Modulation der Motive durch ihre Beziehung zu einem poetischen Gedanken bedingt. Hier ruft nicht ein Thema formgesetzlich das andere hervor, hier sind die Motive nicht die Folge stereotyper Annäherungen oder Gegensätze von Klangfarben und das Kolorit als solches bedingt

unlike Mendelssohn in his *A Midsummernight's Dream* Overture (1826), Joachim created a sonata form that is singular: it is dictated by the subject matter that separates it from a textbook ideal. In this chapter Joachim's handling of sonata form as key to a program – even if this sounds like an oxymoron – will guide our analysis. If the *Hamlet* Overture demonstrated Joachim's pull between the future and the past, this chapter attempts to zoom into his “middle” position and his idiosyncratic and (up to this moment in his career) most daring or “New German” use of expressively diverging (but overall not un-Beethovenian) sonata-form, as well as motivic and harmonic use.

Joachim's partly autobiographical, partly programmatic approach to *Demetrius* was not unique but was one of the approaches of other composers around Liszt, who wove into their dark, subjective overtures autobiographical references. But before we consider Joachim's score and how it opens the door to the intriguing world of his inner life – as another example of *Psychologische Musik* – let us provide an overview of Grimm's and Schiller's *Demetrius* plays and of their relationship to each other and to Joachim.

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nicht die Gruppierung der Ideen. Alle exklusiv musikalischen Rücksichten sind, obwohl keineswegs außer Acht gelassen, denen der Handlung des gegebenen Sujets untergeordnet.“)

### 3.1 Grimm's and Schiller's Demetrius

There is no doubt that Joachim's overture was written to be performed before Herman Grimm's play *Demetrius* (1853).<sup>11</sup> But the most famous dramatic version, of course, had been created by Friedrich Schiller, whose fragment *Demetrius* – surviving in two written-out acts with abundant notes and sketches for the remainder – was his last play (1804-1805).<sup>12</sup>

When Herman Grimm took up *Demetrius*, his play joined a chain of many others, all acknowledging (directly or indirectly) Schiller's fragment, an imposing work

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<sup>11</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:206, letter to Schumann of February 10, 1854: "Beloved master, I just have time before the post office closes to send you the Demetrius Overture, which I just received from the copyist and send herewith with the most affectionate greetings from the young Indian and myself. The sending of the overture happens so hastily because I would like too much to hear your thoughts about it soon. To my natural longing for your judgment in general can be added, this time, that the work should possibly be performed to the piece of Herman Grimm, which is now playing in Berlin, to which, however, I could only agree with a clear conscience if you were not against my work and wouldn't recommend against its performance." ("Geliebter Meister, ich habe vor Postschluss bloß noch Zeit, die Demetrius-Ouvertüre, welche ich eben vom Kopisten bekommen habe und beifolgend übersende, mit den allerherzlichsten Grüßen vom jungen Indier und mir zu begleiten. Die Übersendung der Ouvertüre geschieht deshalb so eilig, weil ich gar zu gerne bald von Ihnen über dieselbe hören möchte. Zu meiner natürlichen Sehnsucht nach ihrem Urteil überhaupt, kömmt diesmal noch, daß das Werk zu dem Stück von Grimm, welches jetzt in Berlin gegeben wird, womöglich gespielt werden soll, was ich aber nur dann mit ruhigem Gewissen zugeben könnte, wenn Sie nicht gegen mein Werk wären und dessen Aufführung nicht widerrieten.") Written a few days before the "Rheinsprung," Joachim did not get feedback to this overture, nor was it performed in Berlin preceding Grimm's play, which was played without orchestral music. See Goertzen, critical commentary to Brahms's arrangements of Joachim's overtures (see fn. 1), xv-xvi.

<sup>12</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Supplemente zu Schiller's Werken. Aus seinem Nachlaß*, ed. Karl Hoffmeister (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1840), 301-347.

dominating literary circles for at least the first half of the nineteenth century. But, Grimm's *Demetrius* encountered a difficult reception in comparison to the overarching giant, as the review of the premiere certifies.

Everything proclaims the tendency of the author [Herman Grimm] to depict the legitimacy of power, namely in a way that destroys all true, purely human and beautiful feelings and that makes the most unnatural possible. Such a tendency is impossible in a poetic work. The first German poet, Schiller, would never have taken up and treated this subject in such a way! [. . .] The widely dispersed respect and regard for the family of the author attracted a visibly favorable public, which nevertheless at the end could not fend off the opinion that public opinion was divided.<sup>13</sup>

As countless reviews of the 1850s reveal, Schiller's fragment and its related sketches provided "material for a psychological and historical picture on the grandest scale"<sup>14</sup> despite having been left unfinished. Schiller's fragment continued to fascinate readers through its psychological complexity.<sup>15</sup> In comparison, Grimm's play did not satisfy

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<sup>13</sup> Grimm's *Demetrius* was premiered on February 24, 1854, see *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* No. 51, printed on March 1, 1854, under "Feuilleton": "Aus allem spricht die Tendenz des Autors, die Macht der Legitimität und zwar in einer Weise zu zeigen, die alle wahren, rein menschlichen und schönen Gefühle vernichtet und die das Unnatürlichste möglich macht. Eine solche Tendenz ist in einem poetischen Werke unmöglich. So würde der erste Deutsche Dichter, Schiller, diesen Stoff nimmer aufgegriffen und behandelt haben! [...] Die weitverbreitete Achtung und Rücksicht für die Familie des Autors hatten ein sichtbar günstiges Publikum versammelt, welches jedoch nicht verhindern konnte, daß am Schluss die Meinung des Publikums eine getheilte war."

<sup>14</sup> *The Athenaeum* 1510, No. 1 (October 4, 1856): 1210.

<sup>15</sup> About a century later, a critic rightly noted that "the mass of notes, sketches, and reflections" that survived show that "this play would have surpassed all Schiller's earlier works in its dramatic intensity, psychological acumen, and poetic splendor." Dr. Sigfrid Henry Steinberg,



some reviewers of the 1850s, partly because it failed to deliver a portrayal of unadorned, realistic feelings. Demetrius's struggle with the question of legitimacy, which is one of the key aspects of the play, is portrayed without displaying the human depths of his psyche. The reviewer cited above pointed to the tendency of Herman Grimm to depict "the legitimacy of power" in a way that "makes the most unnatural" possible. At the same time Grimm avoided "purely human" feelings.

Schiller's fragment was immensely popular among many young ambitious authors and playwrights, including Grimm. But Schiller had set the bar high. Too challenging even for Goethe to finish, the fragment spawned several attempts by younger authors that were judged harshly in comparison to Schiller's influential fragment. Among the authors who extensively reworked Schiller's sketches were, before mid-century, Franz von Maltiz (1817, revised 1835), Gustav Kühne (published 1860), and Otto Friedrich Gruppe (published 1861), while more independent but certainly Schiller-related versions of *Demetrius* survived, in the same time period, by Hermann Grimm (1854), Friedrich Bodenstedt (1856), and of course Alexander Sergeijewitsch Pushkin

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"Adventures of Schiller's 'Demetrius'," *The Times Literary Supplement* (London, England), May 11, 1946, 228.

(*Boris Godunov*, 1825), later the basis for Mussorgsky's opera; Pushkin's play, however, though published in 1831, was not publicly performed, due to censorship, until 1866.

In assessing Joachim's *Demetrius* Overture, Tovey and Spohr explicitly mention Schiller's fragment; the former even presumed that Joachim's overture was written with Schiller's *Demetrius* in mind. Spohr justified his reaction to Joachim's "harmonische Härten" by adding, "In so far as such harshness relates to the tragedy, which I know only in Schiller's fragment (not in the new version of the subject by young Grimm), I certainly cannot tell, but my ears cannot become accustomed to it."<sup>16</sup> Tovey also confirmed Schiller's overarching influence:

Schiller's fragment is very interesting, in itself, in its subject, and in the prolonged efforts Goethe made to arrive at a possible plan for finishing it. He eventually gave up the idea; but not before a considerable mass of literature had been accumulated, what with his discussions and Schiller's posthumous sketches. This mass fills a stout volume, not of Schiller's works, but of the collected *Schriften der Goethesellschaft*. In this volume the *Demetrius* fragment fills some 80 pages. The subject interested Joachim deeply, and he wrote an overture to it, which he did not publish.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "In wiefern solche Härten Bezug auf das Trauerspiel haben, welches ich nur in dem Schillerschen Fragment, nicht in der neuen Bearbeitung des Stoffes vom jungen Grimm, kenne, kann ich zwar nicht wissen, befreunden kann sich aber mein Ohr [...] nicht mehr!" *Joachim Briefe*, I:281-83, letter from Spohr to Joachim of April 23, 1855.

<sup>17</sup> Tovey, 229.

There is no doubt that Joachim read some of Schiller's works intensely in the early 1850s, for he commented about them,<sup>18</sup> not unusual for a cultured young musician like Joachim, who resided in Weimar from fall 1850 to December 1852. What is more, in the late 1860s, Joachim composed a setting of a scene entitled *Marfa's Soliloquy, from Schiller's Unfinished Drama "Demetrius,"* confirming that he was acquainted with Schiller's fragment at that point, if not earlier.<sup>19</sup> His overture of 1853-54, however, is explicitly titled *Ouvertüre zu Herman Grimms "Demetrius,"* Op. 6. Spohr's reference to Grimm and Schiller and to the (rhetorical) question about whether either version justified "harmonische Härten" allows us to assume that Joachim had at least heard of Schiller's *Demetrius* fragment from Spohr's remark, if not in one of the many conversations with Herman Grimm in 1853. Furthermore, during the two intense months of composing the overture – December 1853 and January 1854 – Joachim wrote to Gisela that Schiller was a favorite of his soul ("ein Liebling meiner Seele").<sup>20</sup> In this

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<sup>18</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:98, letter to Arnold Wehner of October 25, 1853; he did like the late Schiller and the aesthetics better than the "pathos" of earlier works, as is evident from a letter to Gisela (ibid., I:376) of October 19, 1856.

<sup>19</sup> "Scene der Marfa aus Schiller's unvollendetem Drama Demetrius (für Mezzo=Sopran und Orchester) von Joseph Joachim," Manuscript #451.500.04 (Hannover, D-HVs).

<sup>20</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 9, letter of December 3-4, 1853.

same letter, in which Joachim reports having begun the overture,<sup>21</sup> he also wrote of “the pathos of Schiller’s speech” (“Pathos Schiller’scher Rede”) and of the “inner worth of the great man Schiller, for whom the love of justice accumulates, in his breast, to a fatalistic force, which demonically ruled his entire life; from the majesty of his thoughts, which carelessly confide in the silent growing seed of truth – challenges notwithstanding; from Schiller’s respect for the individual out of universal love.”<sup>22</sup> Perhaps it is a coincidence that Joachim’s composition of *Demetrius* triggered some reflections about Schiller, but it could also be that Joachim knew Schiller’s play all too well. Some of its topoi would have resonated deeply with Joachim because of their tie to his beliefs about fatalism and determinism, key principles of *Psychologische Musik*, as we recall. The key events in *Demetrius*, of a great hero’s steep, presumptuous rise followed by a tragic fall caused by unforeseen circumstances as well as Marfa’s uncompromising clinging to the truth highlighted in the Scene of Marfa are just two examples of the necessitated nature, according to which the plot in Schiller’s play unfolds. No wonder, then, that Joachim

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>22</sup> “Innern Werth des hohen Menschen Schiller, dem die Gerechtigkeitsliebe zum Fatum in der Brust sich aufgethürmt hat, das dämonisch sein ganzes Leben leitet – von der Majestät des Gedankens, die unbekümmert um alles Hindernis still schwellenden Wahrheitskeim vertraut – von Schillers Achtung des Einzelnen aus Alliebe.” Ibid.

wrote of the “fatalistic force” in Schiller and of his confiding “in the silent growing seed of truth.”

Because Grimm’s play was one of several attempts to finish a much heralded and discussed fragment begun by Schiller in 1804 and 1805 and left unfinished at his death, and because Schiller was highly admired by Joachim, we are obliged to consider, in effect, a literary/musical triangle—Schiller’s *Demetrius* fragment, Grimm’s play, and their relationship to Joachim’s overture. Schiller’s fragment,<sup>23</sup> premiered in Weimar at the *Hoftheater* in 1857, captivates the reader with an intense dramatic tension built up and released over a large-scale span of five acts. In brief, the plot concerns a “false” Demetrius, growing up in Poland around 1600 in the misbelief that he is the legitimate heir to the throne of Czar Boris Godunov in Moscow. The tragic knot is tied when he discovers the truth about his identity – he is not the heir but merely a “pretender” to the throne, a tool used by Godunov’s enemies. Once aware of his identity, Demetrius does not resign but rather pursues his tragic destiny. Having claimed the throne and about to invade Russia, he attempts to cover up the lie – by killing the only person who knows his true origin – and becomes, through a change in character, a cruel tyrant, which leads to his tragic fall.

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<sup>23</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Supplemente zu Schiller’s Werken. Aus seinem Nachlaß*, 301-347.

One of the most intense scenes is the last encounter with Marfa, Demetrius's presumed mother. Here Demetrius resorts to his last option – trying to be accepted as her son – but she follows her conscience and love of truth and does not recognize him, challenges notwithstanding. This results in a huge identity conflict, as recent literature on this play has pointed out.<sup>24</sup> While Schiller's fragment highlights this conflict, Herman Grimm's play does not: there, Demetrius's tragic dilemma is played out mostly in Demetrius's mind. While Joachim's overture is ostensibly a response to Grimm's play, our interpretation of the overture gains considerably from taking into account Schiller's fragment. Indeed, Joachim not only spent considerable time in Weimar, the center of German theater for Goethe and Schiller, but one of Joachim's most important letters about his *Demetrius* Overture specifically refers to Schiller.<sup>25</sup> How Schiller presents Demetrius's psychological conflict affords us a way to see Joachim's music – with its strong and especially dramatic programmatic allusions – in new light, more so than mapping Grimm's play onto the music could afford us.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Alexei Rybakov, "Der 'falsche Demetrius' bei Schiller und Puschkin – Die Frage nach der Identität in den Verstrickungen der Politik und Lüge," in *Zum Schillerjahr 2009 – Schillers politische Dimension*, Bernd Rill, ed. (München: Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, 2009); Jörg Robert, "Selbstbetrug und Selbstbewußtsein. *Demetrius* oder das Spiel der Identitäten," in *Würzburger Schiller-Vorträge 2005*, ed. Jörg Robert (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 5-11, letter of December 3-4, 1853.

As an aside, in Schiller's aesthetic there are some overlapping interests with Joachim's, although differences as well: Schiller elaborated his aesthetic of emotion in his *Ästhetische Briefe* of 1795, relevant to Joachim's approach to composition – where, albeit in different ways, the faculty of feeling is emphasized. One of the key passages of Schiller's letters suggests that a composer's "penetration into the mystery of those laws that hold sway over the inner movements of the human heart" ([Eindringen in das] Geheimnis jener Gesetze [...], welche über die inneren Bewegungen des menschlichen Herzens walten"),<sup>27</sup> can lead, according to Schiller, to his being a "true painter of the soul" ("wahrhafter Seelenmaler").<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Friedrich Schiller, "Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen," in *Sämmtliche Werke* (Augsburg: Bolling'sche Buchhandlung, 1827), vol. 17, 3-183.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>28</sup> Schiller not only was a great dramatist and poet, but he also made important contributions to the philosophy of aesthetics based on Kant and Burke. Overall, Schiller stresses the significance of "Gefühl," building on British empiricism (Burke), and offers through an analogy to Homer the postulate that "all the passions have free play and the rule of the tasteful gives back no feeling. Heroes feel as much as others about the sufferings of mankind, and even that makes them heroic, that they feel suffering strongly and deeply, and yet are not overcome by it." (Alle Leidenschaften haben ein freies Spiel und die Regel des Schicklichen halt kein Gefühl zurück. Die Helden sind für alle Leiden der Menschheit so gut empfindlich als Andere, und eben das macht sie zu Helden, daß sie das Leiden stark und innig fühlen, und doch nicht davon überwältigt werden.") Ibid., 187. Furthermore, recent scholarship complements this train of thought by tying Schiller's *Demetrius* to early nineteenth-century "psychopathology" – thereby tracing, as we have done in Ch. 1, a psychological aspect back to its earlier philosophical origins (see Barbara Mahlmann-Bauer, "Die Psychopathologie des Herrschers – Demetrius, ein Tyrann aus verlorener

In a certain respect Schiller's discussion points to "psychological music." But the "innere Bewegungen des menschlichen Herzens" here are of a general human nature, rather than telling of a specific personal experience such as Joachim's "psychological music" seems to have suggested in *Abendglocken* and, as we shall see, in the *Demetrius* Overture.

### **3.2 Psychological Music and Autobiography: Joachim's Compositional Process in the First Version of Demetrius**

*As with Schumann's "self-projections" of Florestan and Eusebius we have to ask for what and why they were projected."* – Peter Gülke<sup>29</sup>

Two different versions of the orchestral score to the *Demetrius* Overture have been passed down. The earlier and probably first version, a copyist's score,<sup>30</sup> source D-B, Mus. Ms. 11190, dates from between December 1853 and February 1854 – that is, it was

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Selbstachtung," in *Schillers Natur*, ed. Georg Braungart and Bernhard Greiner [Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2005]).

<sup>29</sup> Peter Gülke, "Robert Schumanns jubelnd erlittene Romantik," in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2006).

<sup>30</sup> Borchard, as Goertzen points out, has falsely believed that this was the autograph, although it's a "Randquelle," or see Goertzen, 218.



prepared promptly after completion,<sup>31</sup> while the other version, longer by some thirty measures, was completed later in that year, on September 5, 1854.<sup>32</sup> The former offers two intriguing details missing from the second version, which permit a glimpse into Joachim's compositional process: one is an anagram, and the other a tempo marking. Furthermore, the first version also differs harmonically in several places. The anagram and the tempo marking, as well as some of the harmonic differences, could be related to Grimm's play; the tempo marking, in addition, might carry another, possibly autobiographical implication. In light of Joachim's compositional approach to "psychological music," this chapter aims not only at exploring the music but also at investigating the connections he perceived in composing this work to the idea of using composition as an outlet, an investigation of which the manuscripts' comparison will serve as a gateway.

The first fascinating difference, the anagram is from Herman Grimm's version of the play, cryptically abbreviated with the first letters of the words of four lines. In the score it is located on the last page directly next to the final double bar, in Joachim's own hand:

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<sup>31</sup> Goertzen, critical commentary to *Johannes Brahms Werke, Complete Edition IX*, vol. 1, *Arrangements of Works by Other Composers for One or Two Pianos Four Hands*, ed. Valerie Woodring Goertzen, 218.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

w. / a. a. b. z. d. h. / h. t. s. w. w. / v. a. w. u. i. l. / v. t. d. s. r.

On the empty page across from these abbreviated lines we see, again added in Joachim's hand, the full quotation from Herman Grimm's *Demetrius*:

Wer  
Auf aufgethürmten Bergen zu des Himmels Heiligen Thoren stürmte, wäre weniger  
Vermessen, als wer unter ihrer Last  
Verbrecherischer That die Sonne raubte. —<sup>33</sup>

Whoever  
Has stormed the sacred gates of heaven on the towering peaks, would be less  
Presumptuous, than whoever beneath their burden  
Of criminal deeds robbed the sun.

This passage is taken from Act 5, shortly before the "false" czar – a character in Grimm's play who is later overthrown by a pretender, like Schiller's Godunov by Demetrius – capitulates to the pretender. In Grimm's version, Ivan is the name of the presumably legitimate heir and *second* pretender, while the play begins with Demetrius already on the throne as the first pretender, having overthrown Godunov. In other words, the relationship and conflict of Schiller's characters Boris and Demetrius are mapped, more or less closely, onto the relationship of Demetrius and Ivan in Herman Grimm's version. In Herman Grimm's version, Demetrius offers to Ivan, without any significant protest (except for the inner struggle) his crown, recognizing and honoring Ivan's legitimacy to

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<sup>33</sup> I am grateful for Valerie Goertzen's edition of the Brahms arrangement, which includes this passage from Herman Grimm's *Demetrius*, written in Joachim's handwriting.

inherit the throne, and then stabs himself. But before Demetrius parts, he gives his final speech, which contains seventeen lines, including the words above. Demetrius admits to the crowd that he had attempted to hide the truth, “that I wanted to conceal it so deeply that it would never press against human ears” (“was ich so tief verbergen wollte, dass es nie zu Menschenohren dränge”), but the truth came to light. Demetrius also admits that ruling under these new circumstances was not compatible with the light of day, or with the “sun” – which may stand for “truth.”

Indeed, he admits that if one attempted to rule the “Himmels heilige Thore” “auf aufgethürmten Bergen” one would be less “vermessen” [“presumptuous”] than if one built a kingdom on the “Last verbrecherischer That,” which he decides against and then dies as a morally elevated person. Perhaps it was this passage with Demetrius’s overcoming of pride in exchange for moral elevation and opting for truth as opposed to sustaining a lie, which Joachim meant when he commented in the fall of 1853 on Grimm’s work: “Demetrius has namely made a great impression on me, in his soulful truth” (“namentlich der Demetrius hat einen großen Eindruck auf mich gemacht, in seiner seelischen Wahrheit”).<sup>34</sup>

The word “proud,” in any case, appears in Joachim’s early manuscript version of February 1854 in its Italian translation as a tempo marking: *Maestoso e fieramente*. It is

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<sup>34</sup> Goertzen, XIV; also see *Joachim Briefe*, I:83.

missing from the final and official version of September 1854, which also served Brahms for his piano arrangement of Joachim's *Demetrius* overture.<sup>35</sup>

The tempo marking *Maestoso e fieramente* seems to have been added to this copyist's score at the last minute<sup>36</sup>: it appears on the first notated page below the basses in Joachim's hand (and on top of the score, above the flute, in the copyist's hand<sup>37</sup>). Why was "e fieramente" deleted from the tempo instruction for the September version, which survives altogether in Joachim's hand and reads *Maestoso*?<sup>38</sup> Or, in other words, what contributed to Joachim's emphasis of Demetrius's pride in the opening tempo instruction of the February version? Some intriguing perspective might be gained from Joachim's letters from that time. In early February he reported about his progress with the overture and mentioned, as a recent scholar pointed out, "wechselnde Stimmungen beim Komponieren" ("changing moods during composition"),<sup>39</sup> of which pride seems to

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<sup>35</sup> A discussion of the very fascinating thirty or so different measures in these two versions has to be postponed for a separate study. In sum, Joachim's February manuscript shows a harmonic progression before the sonata form development, which moves from A major to C major while the September version goes from A major to D-flat major.

<sup>36</sup> Goertzen, 218.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 219.

have been one. The composer wrote: “I was a proud, young Demetrius; I felt in my small chamber like someone who bore within a candidacy for great things—for a realm with countless heads (admittedly, only note heads!) with the most splendid voices—I was unbelievably bold.”<sup>40</sup>

Joachim admitted that in the imaginary role of the proud Demetrius, he had great ambition and the boldness to compose “incredibly daring” harsh dissonances. And it sounds as if he had at his feet an army of innumerable heads (“note heads”). This half-imaginary description is reminiscent of the lively, partly musical, partly fictional characters of Schumann’s “*Dauidsbund*,” who had a markedly powerful impact on the contrasting characters of introverted lyricism and extroverted liveliness in Schumann’s music – personified through Eusebius and Florestan. In Joachim’s score, however, the connection that the composer made between *Demetrius* and the score seems more direct – the F-sharp-minor “murderous thoughts” of the angry Demetrius in the next passage

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., XV, fn. 46; also see the original in *Joachim Briefe*, I:151-153, letter to Gisela of February 1, 1854.

<sup>40</sup> “[Ich] wurde ein stolzer, junger Demetrius; ich fühlte mich in meiner kleinen Kammer als Jemand, der Anwartschaft auf Großes ingeboren mit sich trüge – auf ein ganzes Reich mit unzähligen Köpfen (Notenköpfen freilich nur!) mit herrlichsten Stimmen – ich war unglaublich kühn.” Ibid.

of Joachim's letter extend to the level of his use of form – the inner sonata form in F-sharp minor, which is enveloped by a brief introduction-coda frame in D major:

I had empathized so forcefully with your Herman's muse that I myself often became a raging, brooding Demetrius, and brought to paper many murderous thoughts in F-sharp minor.<sup>41</sup>

As we will now investigate in Joachim's letters, his angry "murderous thoughts in F-sharp minor" may have been the result of a process we would call, in the post-Freudian age – psychological transference. Joachim brought to his *Demetrius* Overture – as the letters confirm – some of his own struggles. Similar to Robert Schumann, who projected Florestan and Eusebius onto himself in what Gülke calls "Ich-Projektionen,"<sup>42</sup> which become manifested in the music, Joachim projected Demetrius onto himself and into the music. In the following we shall see that Joachim's personal situation in December 1853 and January 1854 was determined by difficulties with Herman Grimm, which Joachim seemed to have worked through by identifying, to some extent, with Demetrius and composing the overture and writing about it to Gisela.

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<sup>41</sup> "Ich hatte mich so lebhaft in Deines Herman Muse hineingedacht, daß ich selbst oft ein brütender wüthender Demetrius ward, und lauter Mordgedanken in Fis moll zu Papier brachte." See Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 21, letter of February 1, 1854.

<sup>42</sup> Gülke, "Robert Schumanns jubelnd erlittene Romantik," 17.

He had declined Gisela's offer to celebrate Christmas with her family in Berlin and instead remained in Hanover with his friend Hans von Bülow, working diligently on his overture. This decision he later regretted, admitting he had been too proud:

My dear, splendid Giesel, you overwhelm me with a dew of grace, of love, you, my good heaven, whom I can only look at full of yearning for so many good things you have provided. That I didn't come to you for Christmas took its vengeance on me—I regarded myself as too strong and was punished for my heroic presumption. Inexhaustibly much—I might say epoch making—has happened in me during the last week. I had long sacrificed my nature powerfully to an arrogant, moral pride, I had gone astray with one-sided brooding, had willfully and sacrilegiously neglected the great, the small, the near, that it had to come to a climax, that I had to feel myself how groundlessly wretched we become, when we, without regard for everything else seek comfort in our own selfish pride.<sup>43</sup>

Joachim speaks of his own pride, bringing to mind the score's addition of *e fieramente* - and of having viewed himself as too strong, thereby neglecting small things as he was striving for greatness. He even uses the term "presumptuous" ("vermessen") for his own behavior – which is the same term as the one in the Demetrius quotation that

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<sup>43</sup> "Meine liebe, herrliche Giesel, Du überschüttetest mich mit einem Thau der Anmuth, der Liebe, Du, mein gütiger Himmel, den ich nur voll Sehnsucht anblicken kann für so viel besorgte Güthe. Daß ich nicht zu Weihnachten zu Euch gekommen bin, hat sich an mir gerächt – ich hatte mich für zu stark gehalten, und ward für *vermessenes* Heldenthum gestraft. Es ist unendlich viel, ich möchte sagen Epoche machendes in mir vorgegangen in den letzten acht Tagen. Ich hatte so gewaltsam die Natur in mir einem hochmüthigen moralischen *Stolz* seit lange aufgeopfert, ich hatte mich so verrannt in einseitige Grübeleien, hatte so frevelhaft aus Wunsch nach Großem, Kleines, Naheliegendes vernachlässigt, daß es wohl zu einem Klimax kommen mußte, daß ich in mir selbst fühlen mußte, wie bodenlos elend wir werden, wenn wir, rücksichtslos alles andere von unsweisend, nur in unserm eigenen *Selbststolze* Befriedigung suchen." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 15, letter from "after Christmas," 1853.

Joachim inserted at the end of his score. It is, we recall, Demetrius's "Vermessenheit" that makes him fall in the end and summarizes Demetrius's main problems:<sup>44</sup> an overreaching, overly ambitious will. Schiller hit the mark with his summary of the hero's "great, enormous goal of striving, stepping from nothing to the throne and to unlimited power."<sup>45</sup>

It seems that part of Joachim's inner struggles probably had to do with Gisela. Evidently Joachim was, even after the broken-off engagement in the fall of 1853, still infatuated. He disclosed that only composing the greatest dissonances could provide relief from his agitated feelings. Perhaps making his situation worse, he perceived Herman – Gisela's long-time comrade and literary partner as well as implicit fiancé-to-be – as calm and strong in character – diametrically opposed to his own unsteady, agitated self. And even if, in the greater scheme, he might have found a "brother"<sup>46</sup> in

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<sup>44</sup> Jörg Robert, "Selbstbetrug und Selbstbewußtsein. *Demetrius* oder das Spiel der Identitäten," in *Würzburger Schiller-Vorträge 2005*, 113.

<sup>45</sup> "Großes, ungeheures Ziel des Strebens, der Schritt vom Nichts zum Throne und zur unumschränkten Gewalt." Jörg Robert, 113, cites G. W. F. Hegel, *Ästhetik*, ed. F. Bassenge (Berlin: Aufbau, 1965), III:98.

<sup>46</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 93.



Herman, as Borchard suggests, it seems that in the phase of composing the *Demetrius* Overture, Herman was more a “competitor”<sup>47</sup> than anything else.

I was senseless, stung to the point of madness by an inner disquiet, that could not be vented in thoughts, at the most in the harshest dissonances I could fantasize. Then I was again ashamed of myself—wanted to leave Hanover straightaway to be by myself, so that Bülow wouldn’t notice (he had arrived here with me at the same time for Christmas), and by working turn the fermenting material into something pious. I saw Herman opposite myself, quietly assured, happily following his lovely way, after you. Why do I write all of this to you? Must I not of all things be true—must I not say to you that I was inwardly plainly proud, and not good toward people.<sup>48</sup>

The struggle against his pride and with being true to Gisela comes out even more strongly in the next letter:

My yearning knows no bounds; it makes me above all unfit. I am gladly so strong, but I feel as though I would run wild, if, in order to be strong, I always suppressed forceful stirrings. Always tearing at and tutoring oneself is unnatural. I have the idea, that perhaps all would be good, if I first could see

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.: “In Herman Grimm, dem Konkurrenten um die Liebe von Bettines jüngster Tochter Gisela, fand er einen Bruder.”

<sup>48</sup> “[Ich war] sinnlos, bis zum Wahnsinn von einer inneren Unruhe gestachelt, die sich nicht in Gedanken – höchstens in den ärgsten Dissonanzen Luft machen konnte, die ich zusammenfantasierte. Dann schämte ich mich wieder vor mir selber, – wollte bald aus Hannover fortfahren, um allein zu sein – um Bülow nichts merken zu lassen (der gleichzeitig mit mir am Weihnachtsabend hier angekommen war) bald mich bezwingen, und durch Arbeit den gährenden Stoff zum frommen wenden [...]. Mir gegenüber sah ich den Herman, ruhig sicher seinen schönen Weg folgend beglückend, Dir nach [...]. Warum ich Dir das Alles schreibe [...]? Muß ich nicht wahr sein vor allen Dingen – muß ich Dir nicht sagen, daß ich bloß innerlich stolz war, und nicht gut gegen Menschen.” See Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 16, letter written “after Christmas,” 1853.

Herman and tell him everything –I can't really be his friend if he doesn't know everything about me: in any case I must come to Berlin soon.<sup>49</sup>

It seems that the idea of being true to himself about his personal affairs and being true to Herman about his feelings for Gisela was part of what Joachim had recognized in the weeks around the New Year. Joachim also admitted, strikingly, that his friendship with Herman was dependent on his being open with him. Perhaps, then, the “murderous thoughts in F-sharp minor” were an expression of his inner conflict with Herman.

After Christmas, nevertheless, Joachim reported to Gisela that something “epoch-making” had happened in the last days: “Much has happened in me – I want to say epoch making [experiences], in the last eight days.” (“Es ist unendlich viel, ich möchte sagen Epoche machendes in mir vorgegangen in den letzten acht Tagen.”) In the same letter we learn that “*Demetrius* is half written” (“Der *Demetrius* ist [...] halb aufgeschrieben”), which confirms the simultaneity of the personal events and his composition.<sup>50</sup> The epoch-making insights, then, seem to have to do with realization of

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<sup>49</sup> “Mein Sehnen kennt keine Grenzen; es macht mich untauglich zu allem. [...]. Ich bin so gerne stark, aber ich habe ein Gefühl, als würde ich verwildern, wenn ich immer, um stark zu sein, heftige Regungen zurückdrängte. Stets an sich selbst zu zerren und zu hofmeistern – ist unnatürlich. Ich habe die Idee, daß vielleicht alles gut würde, wenn ich den Herman erst sehen, ihm alles sagen könnte – ich kann doch nicht eher wirklich sein Freund sein bevor er nicht alles weiß, von mir selbst: ich muß auf jeden Fall bald nach Berlin.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 17, letter of the “beginning of 1854.”

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 15-17.

having aimed too high – like Demetrius. Both the “proud” declining gesture towards the von Arnims, as well as Joachim’s insights concerning the truth and the lie in his relationship with Herman and Gisela reflect a young twenty-three year-old still struggling to find his life’s path. From a broader perspective this self-perceived struggle with pride and honesty might have to do with the twenty-two year-old’s search for his identity, an idea emphasized in Ch. 2. The idea of a “verborgene oder dunkle”<sup>51</sup> identity, in fact, is one of the central ideas that scholarship on Schiller’s *Demetrius* has discussed in the last decades.<sup>52</sup>

Although Joachim seems to have been astonishingly self-aware for his age, the question of identity was – and would be in the next years – one of major significance for him as he was trying to find his station in life. If Joachim’s impulsive “Absagebrief” – the letter of rejection to Liszt in 1857 – and the “Manifesto” of 1860 were perceived as confrontational, these might have been a reaction to his previous insecurity.<sup>53</sup> As described in one passage above, that he could not “pull” and “tweak” himself any longer but instead had to be the way he was – allowing whatever he was hiding or

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<sup>51</sup> Robert, 122. He refers to I. Graham, “Die Kinder des Hauses: A Model of Schiller’s Imagination,” *The Modern Language Review* 66 (1971): 638.

<sup>52</sup> See Jörg Robert, “Selbstbetrug und Selbstbewußtsein. *Demetrius* oder das Spiel der Identitäten.”

<sup>53</sup> See Borchard’s idea about “Identitätsfindung über Abspaltung,” in “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik,” 209.

concealing from his closest surroundings to come to the surface, most important, his sentiments for Gisela. And so Joachim's choice of Herman Grimm's play can be seen in light of a later commentary, which shows that he had hoped to do Herman and Gisela a favor by employing Herman's text.<sup>54</sup> But part of Joachim's struggle in the months surrounding this overture point, paradoxically, to a conflict of interest between him and Herman.

If "psychological music" is a compositional approach serving in part as an outlet for the composer's emotions, the *Demetrius* Overture reveals this twofold. On the one hand the music became the actual scene in which a conflict was carried out – the conflict of Demetrius and the composer identifying with Demetrius – as we can trace in many deformations of sonata form. But on the other hand, Joachim's own letters about himself, his sense of pride and his dishonesty in a personal situation full of pitfalls, reveal that he had overcome in these weeks – perhaps helped by his self-identification with Demetrius – some of his own inner turmoil.

This evident exchange between ideas of a musical work and the personal situation of the composer is what distinguishes Joachim's "psychological music" from

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<sup>54</sup> "The draft of the [*Demetrius*] Overture quickly originated in great excitement – it was my bliss to think that I was in a position to give you and Herman joy with it." ("Der Entwurf der [*Demetrius*] Ouvertüre war in einer großen Erregung rasch entstanden – es war meine Seligkeit [*sic*] zu denken, daß ich Dir und Herman damit eine Freude zu machen im Stande ware.") Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 151-153, letter of February 1, 1854.

Schumann's employment of half-imaginary, half-real characters in his music, such as Florestan, Eusebius, Meister Raro and others. In Joachim's case, the identification with Demetrius and the process of writing "murderous thoughts in F-sharp minor" exemplifies what we discovered in *Abendglocken*: that the composer perceived composing not only as an end in itself but also as a means – an emotional outlet in tones.

If in Schumann's music the contrasting characters of Eusebius and Florestan and their role play serve as "definite, exterior contents" ("bestimmte äußerliche Gehalte"), they are nevertheless transferred in Schumann's music to a "higher realm of poetry, in that they elevate the share of the inexplicable to the real and allow it to be understood only in the feelings."<sup>55</sup> Joachim does not aim to transcend the "bestimmte äußerliche Gehalte" – rather, the breeding anger of Demetrius in F-sharp minor and the harsh dissonances are transferred "zu Papier" in a candid manner, which adds a stronger autobiographical level to his "psychological music" than what we perceive in Schumann's employment of Florestan and Eusebius. Indeed, the key question about "psychological music" is to ask what the music tells us psychologically. But just as important is the question: What can the composer's letters tell us about his personal experience in relation to his music?

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<sup>55</sup> "... höheres Reich der Poesie, indem sie den Anteil des Unerklärbaren zum Wesentlichen erhebt und nur dem Gefühl verständlich werden läßt." Hubert Moßburger, "Poetische Harmonik," in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Taddey (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler, 2006), 194.

Investigating the overture of a composer who left so many gripping and intimate details about the autobiographical circumstances of his work can be a double-edged sword. While this dissertation about Joachim's "psychological music" intentionally allows room for his confession-like statements about how his music relates to his personal turmoil (following Beatrix Borchard's suggested approach in her Joachim research of including, rather than excluding, the "person" from "Musikwissenschaft"<sup>56</sup>), this approach also entails a potential danger. Constructing meaning in Joachim's music with the help of insights from his intimate letters to Gisela at the time of composition can cloud our view in two ways.

First, such a methodology does not recognize the implication of "psychological music" directed at, written for, and dedicated to – explicitly or implicitly – a very small audience – Gisela. Without her letters we have Joachim's music by itself, but we could not call it "psychological music" in the same way as when we acknowledge her presence.<sup>57</sup> "Psychological music" would not be documented<sup>58</sup> or (presumably)

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<sup>56</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 20-21.

<sup>57</sup> Although we would still have Tovey's remarks on "psychological music," Gisela is a central force in Joachim's mind of the 1850s and, as I argue, an essential inspiration; without her, Joachim's music would be divested of the autobiographical layer that allows us to construct psychological music.

<sup>58</sup> Joachim's letters to Gisela (*Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*) were published in only sixty copies, as the editor clarifies in the foreword.

psychological without Gisela (nor would Joachim, presumably, have needed an emotional musical outlet to the extent that he did). Second, Joachim's "use" of composing as an outlet for his emotions points to a *functionality* of music, while our analysis should ideally aim at looking at the music from more than this perspective. The methodology of this dissertation, and this chapter, is, therefore, two-fold. On the one hand, the goal is to investigate Joachim's music as program music with a strong literary component, that is, in its own right and not only as the music of Brahms's violinist-friend who advanced the absolute-music idea for much of his life as a violinist. On the other hand, we ask what "psychological music" has to do with each composition, that is, we explore the confessional nature of Joachim's music in light of its surroundings and personal conflict. For the former task it might be fruitful not to put too much emphasis on Joachim's own views.

Peter Gülke<sup>59</sup> has thought about the issue of biography and musical interpretation in the life and works of Schumann, and has offered insights into methodology, which might also be helpful in the case of Joachim:

That we know more biographical details about him than all other musicians of his rank results from a reaction like that of Georg Brandes on the occasion of the publication of Kierkegaard's diaries or like that of Herder, when Rousseau's

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<sup>59</sup> Gülke, 19.

*Confessions* appeared: “Admittedly, we have a key; but I wish one didn’t have it.”<sup>60</sup>

Taking this idea, we will proceed in the following analysis, which presents the *Demetrius* Overture in light of its program, by setting aside Herman Grimm’s version of *Demetrius*, to explore how Joachim adapts Schiller’s version to create a portrait of Demetrius. But before we proceed, let us first situate Joachim’s *Demetrius* Overture in the scholarly literature.

### *Literature Review*

Joachim’s Overture to Herman Grimm’s *Demetrius* remains unpublished to this day. However, the recent publication of Joachim’s piano arrangements by Brahms (Brahms *Gesamtausgabe* Henle, 2013) has opened an important new avenue for Joachim research. The scores compared in this chapter are the early manuscript version of the orchestral score, finished in early February 1854,<sup>61</sup> and the final version, completed in September

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<sup>60</sup> “Daß wir von ihm biographisch mehr und detaillierter wissen als von allen Musikern seines Ranges, legt eine Reaktion wie die von Georg Brandes anlässlich der Publikation von Kierkegaards Tagebüchern nahe oder wie die von Herder, als Rousseaus *Confessions* erschienen: ‘Einen Schlüssel haben wir nun freilich; ich wollte aber, man hätte ihn nicht.’” Ibid, cites Johann Gottfried Herder, *Briefe*, ed., chosen, and introduced by Wilhelm Dobbek (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1959), 215.



1854,<sup>62</sup> which served Brahms as a model for his piano arrangement; measure numbers in this chapter refer to the latter version.

Because none of the recent monographs<sup>63</sup> or articles<sup>64</sup> about Joseph Joachim as composer (or violinist *and* composer) focus on *Demetrius* beyond mentioning it, it appears sensible to present the overture in light of the autobiographical self-representation in Joachim's letters. At the same time we shall make a case for this piece as an idiosyncratic programmatic overture, which can be mapped convincingly onto Schiller's play, written before the great divide, which had not yet triggered the polemics about "absolute music" and "program music" but found its place between them.

The tension of Joachim's situating himself (or being situated) "in the middle," however, eventually had to find relief, as Ch. 2 on *Hamlet* suggested. Perhaps one way in which Joachim did find relief is manifested in the extreme turn of events (and

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<sup>61</sup> Manuscript Joseph Joachim 3, Inventarnummer: XII 39690, A-Wgm (Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Wien).

<sup>62</sup> Mus. Ms. 11190, D-B (Berlin, Bibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz).

<sup>63</sup> Borchard's 2006 monograph, *Stimme und Geige*; see also Borchard's article "Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik."

<sup>64</sup> Borchard and Heidy Zimmermann, eds., *Musikwelten-Lebenswelten. Jüdische Identitätssuche in der deutschen Musikkultur* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009); Michele Calella and Christian Glanz, eds., *Anklänge 2008. Joseph Joachim (1831-1907): Europäischer Bürger, Komponist, Virtuose* (Vienna: Mille Tre, 2008).

relationships) in 1857 when Joachim wrote his famous “letter of rejection”

(“Absagebrief”) to Liszt.<sup>65</sup>

Although Joachim’s *Demetrius* predates Hanslick’s *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (*The Beautiful in Music*), the ideas of separation between “program” and “absolute” music were in the air – Joachim even used terms like “Weimarer Schule” and “Klassiker” as umbrella terms to designate Lisztian and non-Lisztian camps. But he considered *himself* part of both. On the one hand, he wrote to Liszt as if he viewed himself as part of the “Weimarer Schule,” referring to himself and the others as “we younger contemporaries” (“wir jüngere Genossen”), and expressed the hope that the *Karlsruher Musikfest* directed by Liszt in the fall of 1853 would motivate them to “new activities” (“neue Thätigkeit”).<sup>66</sup>

But on the other hand he complimented Liszt’s *Weber Polonaise* and the *Rhapsody with Orchestra* by pointing out that “the freedom of form in the latter has something so captivating that even the most hardened ‘classicists’ ‘gypsied along’ with true admiration,” referring here to his and von Bülow’s reaction.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See Alan Walker, “The War of the Romantics,” in *Franz Liszt. The Weimar Years, 1848-1861* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 338 ff., 346.

<sup>66</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:173.

<sup>67</sup> “Die Freiheit der Form in der letzteren hat etwas so Fesselndes, dass selbst die eingefleischtesten ‘Klassiker’ mit wahrer Liebe mitzigeunerten.” Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:196

Joachim's labels for what would later be known as the "formalist" and the "New German" schools, however, suggest only that the divide was in the air but not quite yet fully materialized for Joachim. Ideas such as Hanslick's claim, as parsed by Dahlhaus, that "literary or visual programs [...] [were seen as] 'extramusical, aesthetically not relevant additions to instrumental music'"<sup>68</sup> were far from Joachim's mind when he wrote his *Demetrius* Overture. Nowhere does he hint – in writing – at the compositional consequences that a divide between the "Weimarer Schule" and the "Klassiker" would later clearly entail. Hence he could comfortably use a (reactionary) sonata-form-driven narrative, complemented by (revolutionary, Lisztian) *Tonmalerei* and dissonances.

When we rely, in this chapter, on Joachim's use of form to support a literary narrative, as some recent scholarship has done even for works considered "purely instrumental"<sup>69</sup> music, we do not mean to advance a Hanslickian ideology, that "pure, absolute music" ("reine, absolute Tonkunst")<sup>70</sup> can exist on its own because it is "form in an emphatic sense," that is, "a spirit forming itself outward from within" ("sich von

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<sup>68</sup> "... außermusikalische, ästhetisch nicht zur Sache gehörige Zusätze zur Instrumentalmusik." Carl Dahlhaus, *Die Idee der absoluten Musik* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1978), 131.

<sup>69</sup> Fred Everett Maus, "Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative," in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed. by James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 466.

<sup>70</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik* (Laaber: Laaber, 1988), 373, cites Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (Darmstadt, 1965, reprint from 1854), 20.

innen heraus gestaltender Geist").<sup>71</sup> Joachim's music does not represent the type of "instrumental music that one raised to a metaphysical worth" ("Instrumentalmusik, die man zu metaphysischer Würde erhob"),<sup>72</sup> even if such an aesthetic is usually associated with Joseph Joachim's violin playing, as Karen Leistra-Jones has recently discussed.<sup>73</sup>

Even if the obviously Lisztian programmatic hints in Joachim's music (here the *Tonmalerei* in *Demetrius*), might be clearly of lesser importance than they are in Liszt's music, according to Dahlhaus<sup>74</sup> they still point in a direction not always fully recognized in research on Joachim the composer of the early 1850s.

Indeed, as much as "Liszt's symphonic poems were carried by a cultural tradition, the fall of which they did not survive" ("Liszt's Symphonische Dichtungen waren getragen von einer Bildungstradition, deren Zerfall sie nicht überlebt haben"), so too were Joachim's works – written a few months after Weimar – part of such a

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<sup>71</sup> Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 373, cites Hanslick, 34.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 369.

<sup>73</sup> Leistra-Jones describes Joachim's [the violinist's] absolutist aesthetic in the latter nineteenth-century in terms of "sincerity and authenticity." See Karen Leistra-Jones, "Staging Authenticity: Joachim, Brahms, and the Politics of *Werktreue* Performance," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66, No. 2 (2013): 397.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 370.

“Bildungstradition.”<sup>75</sup> His particular instance of “Tonmalerei” - as Tovey reported – and the anagrams in the early manuscript of the *Demetrius* overture could have been, and likely were, part of the same “Bildungstradition.”

Beatrix Borchard’s claim that Joachim’s *Psychologische Musik* as a whole can be “equated” to “compositional technique” with a search for music “with short, characteristic themes and motives that do not change rhythmically or in intervallic structure, but appear in new light again and again through a different harmonization, change in tempo or beat, and especially in instrumentation”<sup>76</sup> can be reconsidered, developed, and slightly altered through our analytical findings in the *Demetrius* Overture. That Joachim varies considerably the rhythm of some themes in the *Demetrius* Overture – not typical of Liszt’s “thematic transformation” (to which Borchard’s description of Joachim’s “compositional technique” seems to allude) – and that the themes, although originating in small motives, expand to larger dimensions while almost strictly adhering to the classical four + four syntax, has not been studied in detail.

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<sup>75</sup> Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 367.

<sup>76</sup> “Arbeit mit kurzen, charakteristischen Themen und Motiven[,] [welche] [...] rhythmisch und in der Intervallstruktur unverändert [...] aber immer wieder durch andere Harmonisierung, Wechsel in Tempo und Takt und vor allem in der Instrumentierung neu beleuchtet [werden].” Borchard, “Psychologische Musik,” in *Stimme und Geige*, 121.

Furthermore, Borchard's general remark that locates *Psychologische Musik* – “between the concept of a Schumannian poetic music and the Lisztian concept of program music”<sup>77</sup> can be altered slightly in order to clarify Joachim's aesthetic position. We could say that the *Demetrius* Overture exemplifies “psychological music” as located *between a Lisztian literary program and a Schumannian layer of autobiography*, which Joachim, however, makes entirely his own by using sonata form to reveal his reverence for Beethoven's classical structures.

With regard to Joachim's literary interests, the recent literature has not stressed enough that the young violinist-composer was, in fact, quite well-read, as his letters confirm, which makes it plausible that he might have known, in fact, not only Grimm's but also Schiller's *Demetrius* play in the 1850s.<sup>78</sup> In turn, Joachim's literary interests may help to explain the psychological depth of the music.

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<sup>77</sup> Borchard, “Ein später Davidsbund. Zum Scheitern von Joachims Konzept einer psychologischen Musik,” 229.

<sup>78</sup> Rather than agreeing with Borchard that “Joachim was no intellectual artist” (“Joachim war kein intellektueller Künstler”; *Stimme und Geige*, 38), I support Eshbach's reading that Joachim's aesthetic advanced no particular rejection of text and music, but on the contrary “like Mendelssohn, Joachim was a great lover of words” and that “Joachim was brought up with this aesthetic, which he received as much from Böhm, Hauptmann, Schumann, and Bettina von Arnim as he did from Mendelssohn.” And furthermore, that he was friends, during his lifetime, with “the Arnims, the Grimms, Tennyson, Browning, Thackeray, Dickens, and Eliot,” as well as Mörike. See Eshbach, “Joachim's Youth-Joachim's Jewishness,” 573.

Moser's early biography<sup>79</sup> was written under the composer's supervision at the end of his life and presents the early Weimar period in a tone strongly colored by stereotypes about the aesthetics wars in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It is difficult to ignore Moser's apologetic tone for Joachim's sympathies for Liszt and the "New German School." While Moser does not discuss Joachim's compositional efforts in thematic, formal or harmonic detail, he does comment on Liszt's influence on Joachim's compositions composed in Weimar and after:

To what degree Joachim's style had, during his short sojourn in Weimar, lost the Leipzig influence, and to what extent he was imbued with the spirit of the "New German School," can be nowhere better seen than in the *Frühlingsphantasie* (of three pieces Op. 2), the whole conception, harmonic progression, and pianoforte accompaniment of which clearly show Liszt's influence. The piece also possesses, however, in spite of this, many a feature which shows that the pupil of Hauptmann and Mendelssohn was not dead but sleeping."<sup>80</sup>

The "entleipzigerte" and "verweimaranerte"<sup>81</sup> style of some of the Weimar works would have presumably also been attributed to the *Demetrius* Overture, although Moser does not look at the work in any detail. Such adjectives imply a subtle but unmistakable derogatory tone towards Weimar and a supporting one towards Leipzig – an attitude,

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<sup>79</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild. 1831-1856.*

<sup>80</sup> *Joseph Joachim. A Biography (1831-1899)*, trans. Lilla Durham (London: Philip Wellby, 1901). See Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:113-114.

<sup>81</sup> Bülow's words about Joachim. See Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:98-99.

which might partly explain why the author considered the overtures – with their clear programmatic allusions – only in passing. Moser’s discussion of the *Hamlet Overture*<sup>82</sup> sounds particularly apologetic, suggesting we have to consider what, from Joachim’s point of view, could justify such a dark outlook. Rather than view the earlier works of the 1850s through Moser’s appraisal of Joachim’s attitude around 1900, we will investigate the 1850s as much as possible from the perspective of the young composer and his programmatic and autobiographical allusions, and not from the perspective of the performer of the late nineteenth century.

In effectively mapping Joachim’s written expression about his compositional experience onto his music, we shall clarify two points. Joachim as a composer was and has remained a secondary figure, located on the periphery of Brahms scholarship and in the history of music and the history of the overture, the violin concerto, etc. But as a member of Gisela’s circle he saw himself as culturally and ethnically exotic, or as a minority, understandably so, considering his Jewish/Hungarian heritage. Joachim’s peripheral role in the general scheme of scholarship justifies this chapter’s approach of bringing together two distinct layers of extramusical meaning in relation to his *Demetrius Overture*, one of which is the autobiographical mode of subjectivity. As recent

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<sup>82</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:145.



research on “the trouble with autobiography” has suggested, “the autobiographical as modality of self-representation” [...] ranges across disciplines and intervenes in places previously closed to minoritarian subjects.”<sup>83</sup> As a composer who abandoned composing shortly into his career and who did not have the spotlight of scholarship shine on most of his music, including unpublished works, the use of autobiography gives Joachim a voice and brings to light the intimate reflections and confessions in his letters – and in his compositions. As Borchard argues, Joachim’s letters to Gisela are “confessional” (“bekenntnishaft”).<sup>84</sup>

### **3.3 Sonata Form, or: Power Struggles between D Major and F-sharp Minor**

In his overture Joachim employs several musical means to capture the dramatic conflict in Schiller’s (and, broadly speaking, Grimm’s) play between Demetrius and Boris Godunov, precipitating Demetrius’s descent into madness. First, the dramatic duality is underscored not only in the contrasting moods and behaviors of the

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<sup>83</sup> Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, “The Trouble with Autobiography: Cautionary Notes for Narrative Theory,” in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed. by James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 367.

<sup>84</sup> Borchard 40, explains that especially between 1854-1856 Joachim went through a crucial time “Jahre [...], in denen der Anfangszwanzigjährige zwischen dem Beruf des Virtuosen und dem Wunsch nach einer ganz auf die kompositorische Arbeit gegründeten Existenz schwankte. Sie [die Briefe an Gisela] unterscheiden sich in ihrem bekenntnishaften Charakter deutlich von der späteren Korrespondenz mit seiner Frau Amalie.” Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 40.

brass/string motives but also in Joachim's application of a double form – or, more precisely, a form within a form – centered on the contrasting keys of F-sharp minor and D major. As for Demetrius's growing instability, from the moment of his confrontation with the truth concerning his origin, Joachim turns to augmentation, applied in several stages<sup>85</sup> in the development, a patently programmatic feature almost reminiscent of musical tone painting.

We have already pointed out that one of his principal stratagems for expressing his program was to adapt traditional sonata form in order to achieve psychological depth. As in the case of Robert Schumann's overtures, as Jost has observed, the more an overture tries to accommodate the programmatic ideas of a play on which it is based, "the stronger the tension becomes with a pre-existent form like sonata form."<sup>86</sup> To Liszt, the progenitor of the symphonic poem – developed, of course from the concert overture – this concept was not unfamiliar. And surely, it was with Joachim's treatment of sonata form in mind that Tovey claimed that Joachim's overture showed the composer's "understanding" of the New Germans "through and through."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Through the main stages of finding out the truth, changing in character, becoming subject to horror, anger, and cruelty, and eventually committing suicide.

<sup>86</sup> Jost, "Ouvertüren," 372; Struck, "Am Rande der 'großen Form' — Schumann's Ouvertüren und ihr Verhältnis zur Symphonie (mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der *Ouvertüre zu Shakespeare's Julius Cäsar* op. 128)," 252.

To establish connections between the play and Joachim's music, we shall focus on 1) the introduction and its dual presentation of Boris and Demetrius, 2) the duality in form and harmony set up by the exposition, 3) Demetrius's growing unrest in the development and his inexorable progression toward the catastrophe, and 4) the resolution of the tragedy in the recapitulation and coda, which reveals the outcome of the power struggle.

When the form of Joachim's overture is compared to conventional ternary-sonata form, Joachim's "deformations" (see Hepokoski and Darcy; Schmidt-Beste) readily emerge in relief. As Schmidt-Beste maintains,<sup>88</sup> "What makes the nineteenth-century sonata so interesting are the different ways in which different composers managed to adopt and adapt the historical model to suit their own creative purposes and their own time, mediating between tradition and innovation – with Beethoven as a permanent model for both."<sup>89</sup>

If we compare Joachim's overtures to each other, it becomes evident that *Hamlet* and *Demetrius* – two of the three most programmatic ones – indeed use quite a

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<sup>87</sup> Source see fn. 2, above.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas Schmidt-Beste, *The Sonata* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 128.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

conservative form as an “ideal form” from which the composer diverges. Joachim uses here a formal standard close to a symphonic standard. For example, unlike Liszt’s symphonic poems, Joachim’s overtures display the device of the “false” expositional repeat, which Hepokoski and Darcy discuss as a “Brahmsian” means of evoking “false implications”<sup>90</sup> in works “in which a listener might expect a sonata form with expositional repeats.”<sup>91</sup> The overture and the symphonic poem, clearly, do not usually feature this device. Joachim’s three overtures, however, use this device in varying degrees of prominence.

As Joachim had in his *Hamlet* Overture, in the *Demetrius* Overture he oriented his formal approach again to Beethoven – incorporating many “deformations” we would expect to see in later Beethovenian forms, while at the same time showing, through unusual chromaticism and motivic choices, that he was intentionally going beyond the *Hamlet* Overture of the previous year. Even the *Kleist* Overture of 1856, though similarly dark in tone as some sections of *Demetrius*, does not show such imaginative and fantasy-driven use of form, which in the *Demetrius* Overture becomes strongly suggestive of a narrative. While Joachim’s work was, like many of its day – also von Bülow’s

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<sup>90</sup> James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory. Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 350.

<sup>91</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 351.

*Stimmungsbild Nirwana* – originally intended as a theater overture,<sup>92</sup> Joachim's overture was never performed as such and instead turned into a powerful psychological play itself, in which the music acts out the dramatic conflict through the choice of the two competing keys: F-sharp minor and D major. We shall now investigate the "narrative" of the *Demetrius* Overture while keeping in view the dramatic events of the play. In the end we shall offer an interpretation that ties the autobiographical program to the music and includes again Joachim's own comments – on sonata form and beyond – which are unabashedly psychological in tone.

### 3.3.1 Introduction

Let us begin by considering Joachim's own analytic comment about his overture, which emphasizes the dual opposition of forces as the essential pith of the plot and music: "Two motives appear and cross each other, one in the brass (which couldn't be avoided), the other in the four string parts: the latter recedes for a while dampened, as if ceasing—but, turned into a repugnant form, it breaks out with new energy, always faster and passionate and then holds sway over the allegro."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Musikalische Interpretation. Hans von Bülow* (Stuttgart, 1999), 37.

<sup>93</sup> "Zwei Motive treten auf und kreuzen sich, das eine im Blech (das war nicht zu vermeiden), das andere im Quartett: das Letztere tritt eine Weile gedämpft zurück, wie aufhorchend – aber übel

At the same time he noted in a letter to Gisela, “How delighted I am with the *Demetrius* Overture. Your analysis of the piece is splendid, and will provide a good service to me as I compose.”<sup>94</sup> From this comment we may deduce that she had contributed thoughts to the overture, though, unfortunately, we lack documentation in her hand.

mm. 1-3	Introductory themes 1a and 1b	D major
mm. 4-5	“Demetrius” theme	D major
mm. 21	Lyrical theme	D major (modulating to G, varied repeats modulate to C, B-flat, ending on a half cadence (V) of D major (I).
mm. 45-47	Closing theme	
mm. 49-51	Introductory themes 1a and 1b	D major
mm. 52	“Demetrius”	D major

**Figure 4, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Formal Overview of the Introduction**

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verstellt bricht es mit neuer Heftigkeit hervor, immer rascher, leidenschaftlich und beherrscht dann das Allegro.” See *Joachim Briefe*, I:124, letter to Herman Grimm of December 11, 1853.

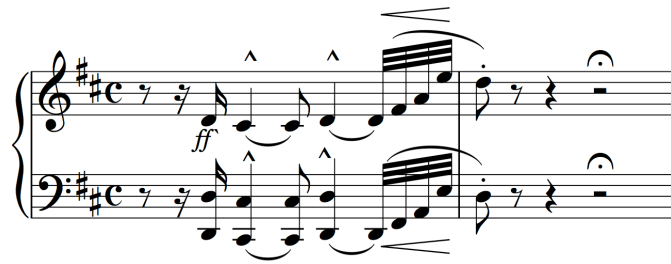
<sup>94</sup> “Wie freue ich mich auf die Demetrius Ouvertüre! Deine Analyse des Stückes ist vortrefflich, und wird mir beim Componiren gute Dienste leisten,” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 7-13, letter of December 3-4.

The work opens with a glorious four-measure theme in majestic dotted rhythms presented in the brass, evoking a proud and powerful air (theme 1a, Ex. 62). Its octave leaps are followed by an ascending triadic fanfare confirming its determined assertiveness and magnificence. This ascending triadic figure (theme 1b, appended at the end) later returns independent of the theme.

The image shows a musical score for two piano parts, Klavier I and Klavier II, in E major (one sharp) and common time (C). The tempo/mood is marked 'Maestoso'. Klavier I consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). It begins with a piano (p) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (cresc.) and then fortissimo (ff). The melody features dotted rhythms and octave leaps. Klavier II also consists of two staves. It begins with a piano (p) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (cresc.) and then fortissimo (ff). The melody features a triplet of eighth notes and a final fortissimo (ff) chord. The score is for measures 1-2 of Theme 1a and measure 3 of Theme 1b.

**Example 62, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Theme 1a (mm. 1-2) and 1b (m. 3)**

Just before conclusion of the fourth measure, however, a short snippet-like motive of less than a measure in length intrudes. Short as it is, it asserts its authority, as if it too belongs to the grand opening of the overture, although it contrasts strikingly in character, creating the first impression of a musical interloper somewhat out of place (Ex. 63):



**Example 63, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Demetrius Motive (mm. 4-5)**

The rhythm of the motive is especially noteworthy here. Joachim observed in a letter that “rhythmically it can be performed only with difficulty: for German orchestras usually lack a precise feeling for the rhythm.”<sup>95</sup> This is the motive that subsequently generates abundant tritones and other “Vorhaltsfiguren,”<sup>96</sup> which Spohr criticized for appearing much too frequently, resulting in an effect that was “truly ear -shattering and painful.”<sup>97</sup> But from this tyrannical Demetrius motive, with its violent rhythm and harmonic harshness, Joachim generated the large-scale organic cohesion of the overture, and allowed its sheer power over the music to alter the course of the form from the

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<sup>95</sup> “Es wird nur rhythmisch schwierig auszuführen sein: den deutschen Orchestern gebricht es in der Regel an genauer Empfindung des Rhythmus,” *Joachim Briefe*, I:124, letter to Herman Grimm of December 11, 1853.

<sup>96</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:282, letter from Spohr to Joachim of April 23, 1855.

<sup>97</sup> “Wahrhaft ohrzerreißend” and “peinigend.” *Joachim Briefe*, I:281, letter from Spohr to Joachim of April 23, 1855. Spohr mostly criticized Joachim for a suspending figure of an augmented second to a third. The tritones in the main theme, which he called “Vorhalt for der Quint im Thema des Allegros” (“suspension to the fifth in the Allegro theme”) were among the few harmonic harshnesses Spohr viewed as acceptable.



traditional sonata-form template. In the earliest phase of composition, in early December 1853, this motive was the one that preoccupied the composer, who reported to Gisela: “Now it bubbles and ferments ever so powerfully: [Demetrius motive, Ex. 63, above] I hear it continually.”<sup>98</sup>

In mm. 21-25 we hear a beautiful theme in D major (Ex. 64), a counterweight to the sharp rhythm of the Demetrius theme. This theme, significantly, will return, as the epitome of D major, in the coda.



**Example 64, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture* (mm. 21-25)**

Yet another theme, which returns later, serves as an appendix-like closing (Ex. 65), before Joachim wraps up the introduction with the opening material:

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<sup>98</sup> “Jetzt brausts und gährts aber noch mächtig: [Ex. 63, Demetrius motive, p. 198] höre ich immerfort,” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 5-11, letter of December 3-4, 1853.



**Example 65, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Closing Theme (mm. 45-48)**

With these introductory themes the composer leads us through a rather long prologue, the purpose of which, in Hepokoski's and Darcy's conception of sonata form, is to "prolong the sense of anticipation and formal preparation for a rapid-tempo sonata-to-come."<sup>99</sup> The length also makes a statement about the grandeur of the piece. Once again, Hepokoski and Darcy: "The longer the introduction, the more importance is being claimed for the piece as a whole."<sup>100</sup> But the introduction serves too particular a function, as we recall from Joachim's comment that certain motives appear briefly before retiring for a while then breaking out at a later point ever more passionately. We could describe

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<sup>99</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 292.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

this function as an instance of “prolepsis”<sup>101</sup> – or a flash forward, allowing a brief glimpse into the future, where the thematic conflict will overpower the music.

The D-major introduction merges, after 57 measures that are driven by energetic repetitions of the Demetrius motive, into the *Allegro molto appassionato*, in F-sharp minor. To accomplish this connection, Joachim uses a simple but effective progression from a first-inversion D major harmony (I<sup>6</sup>) to F-sharp minor in root position (iii), retaining two common tones (F-sharp and A). The introduction, however, has another important function, which is to provide a binary opposition of thematic areas: the majestic (dotted motive)/tyrannical (rapid rhythmic motive) opposition in D major contrasts with a lyrical theme ending on the subdominant and involving figurative variations – a compositional staple of Joachim – which provides a middleground between music of formal grandeur and uncanny prophecies.

As a mirror-like structural device and counterweight to the substantial D-major introduction, Joachim added at the other end of the movement a coda that revives the slow introduction and its major mode in D, thereby enveloping the body of the movement, a sonata form in F-sharp minor. This popular structural device, besides drawing a connection to *Hamlet* (the scene of the play within the play) and to Joachim’s/von Arnim’s sketch for a melodrama (see Ch. 5), is rich in its associations and

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 300.

implications for the plot, as the following diagram of the form reveals. The frame surrounding the sonata form is largely independent from it with regard to thematic material and harmonic realms, except for the Demetrius theme, which plays a major role in both, a significant point to which we shall return. Here is a schematic summary of the form of the entire overture:

D major	F-sharp minor		F-sharp minor	D major
<b>Introduction</b> Theme 1a and 1b (D) Demetrius motive (D); Theme S1 (D, G, C, B-flat); Closing theme (d) Theme 1a and b (D) Demetrius motive (D)	<b>Exposition</b> Primary theme (f-sharp) ; mod. to D, b; mod.; Theme S2 and varied repeat (A) Theme 1b, F; Closing theme (a; A) Theme 1a, Demetrius motive (A)	<b>Development</b> Theme 1a and b, Demetrius motive (D-flat), mod. to B-flat, 1b (F), Theme S2 (C, G, g), four-note chromatic motive and Demetrius motive (dominating the process, e, mod. to D)	<b>Recap</b> (preceded by “wrong key” recap in D), Demetrius theme (f-sharp) augmented, (c-sharp); Theme S2, varied repeat (D then F-sharp); Closing theme (f-sharp). Ends in f-sharp.	<b>Coda</b> Transition from f-sharp to D. Theme 1b (D) Theme S1 (D, C, B-flat) Closing theme (d) D major

**Figure 5, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Formal Diagram**

Joachim would have been familiar with earlier works that used an introduction-coda frame,<sup>102</sup> such as Beethoven’s *Pathétique* Sonata (first movement) and Piano Trio Op. 70 No. 2 (first movement), Schubert’s *Unfinished Symphony* (first movement),

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<sup>102</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, “The Introduction-Coda frame,” in *Elements of Sonata Theory. Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, 304-305; I am indebted to the authors’ impressive collection of sonata form examples using an “Introduction-Coda frame.”

Berlioz's Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*,<sup>103</sup> Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture and Wagner's *Tannhäuser* Overture, which Joachim heard in Weimar and performed in Hanover at his new post on February 5, 1853.<sup>104</sup>

But the introduction-coda frame was even more common to sonata form later in the nineteenth century. By having the major-mode frame a minor-mode sonata form, Joachim promotes a technique that Tchaikovsky and others would use in their overtures, such as Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, where "the massive introduction and coda 'dwarf' the relatively small but vigorous sonata form deformation within."<sup>105</sup> Indeed, as Hepokoski and Darcy suggest, an introduction-coda frame can "subordinate" "the interior sonata [form] . . . to the outward container,"<sup>106</sup> a claim we will revisit in the coda section below. Just as the opening motives of the introduction set up a strong duality, so does the double formal arrangement: two keys, D major and F-sharp minor, compete for

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<sup>103</sup> "Weimar [. . .] Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini* was performed here a few days ago (through Liszt's energetic, artistic zeal!), and I find so much new, stimulating in it, that I gladly want to give the composer my personal thanks for the intellectual stimulation that his music gives me." ("Weimar [...] Die Oper von Berlioz 'Benvenuto Cellini' nämlich wurde (durch Liszt's energischen künstlerischen Eifer!) vor einigen Tagen hier aufgeführt, und ich finde soviel Neues, Anregendes in derselben, daß ich gerne dem Komponisten meinen persönlichen Dank für die geistige Beschäftigung, welche mir seine Musik machte, bringen will.") *Joachim Briefe*, I:28, letter to his brother Heinrich of March 24, 1852.

<sup>104</sup> Borchard, 108, cites Fischer, *Musik in Hannover* (Leipzig, 1903), 164.

<sup>105</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 305.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

the reigning power in the overture, and for status as the governing tonic. In a broad sense, this conflict between two keys mirrors the conflict at the heart of the *Demetrius* plot: the conflict between two successors to the throne.

### 3.3.2 Exposition in F-sharp Minor

Exposition		
mm. 57-103	Primary theme ("Demetrius") and varied repeats	F-sharp minor (modulation to D, b)
mm. 103-112	Transition (using theme 1b from the introduction)	B minor, D major
mm. 113-144	Secondary theme (with varied repeats)	A major
mm. 149-150	Theme 1b	F major
mm. 157-172	Closing theme	A minor / A major
mm. 173-179	Theme 1a and "Demetrius," end of the exposition.	A major

**Figure 6, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Diagram of the Exposition**

In the opening of the exposition we confront the dark world of F-sharp minor, where the Demetrius motive from the slow introduction now fills out a four-square theme,<sup>107</sup> suffused, as Spohr stressed, with a harsh harmonic device, which Spohr called

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<sup>107</sup> Dahlhaus, "Liszt's Bergsymphonie und die Idee der Symphonischen Dichtung," 108.

“Vorhalt” (“suspension”). Even if, overall, the harmonic duality of D major and F-sharp minor can be tied to the dual opposites of the czar and the pretender, here in the F-sharp minor section we seem to experience music that expresses terror or excruciating conflicts, reinforced by tritons that keep the music on edge and unsettled.

Joachim’s primary theme is constructed upon a broad scale that requires 36 measures, falling into even-measured units.<sup>108</sup> But if the symmetrical syntax points to a classical model, Joachim’s theme is, through and through, a gesture of a tritone expanded for 36 measures. Although Spohr used the word “Vorhalt” (Ger. for suspension) to describe the ubiquitous tritone in Joachim’s overture, the sonority in question is a similar dissonance, which, however, is not quite a suspension according to standard understanding, as it is lacking the necessary preparation.<sup>109</sup> In Joachim’s eight-measure-long primary theme (Ex. 66), which begins with a pickup, the dissonance Spohr was alluding to is placed on the first down-beat, where it creates a grinding tritone with the f-sharp-a harmony, which is resolved on the weak, second, beat of the next measure.

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<sup>108</sup> The primary theme breaks down into eight measures (antecedent and consequent) and six measures (elaborating a half-cadence), followed by eight measures that bridge to a varied repeat and fourteen measures of the theme’s varied repeat.

<sup>109</sup> The suspension is defined as “a form of discord arising from the holding over of a note in one chord as a momentary part of the chord which follows, it then resolving by falling [or rising] a degree to a note which forms a real part of the second chord.”

The tritone takes center spotlight and determines the tone of the theme, and appears on five more downbeats of its seven remaining measures.

**Allegro molto appassionato**

Example 66, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Demetrius Theme, beginning with a pickup to m. 58 (mm. 57-65)

Remarkably, two of the six tritone measures place the dissonant note on an eighth-note followed by rests, until in the end of the measure it is picked up again (after a sixteenth-note pickup) and resolved in the next measure, marking the boxed notes as harsh, “ear-tearing” unresolved dissonances:

**Allegro molto appassionato**

Example 67, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Primary Theme (mm. 57-60)



Harmonically, Joachim's tritones resolve upwards, making them resemble the slightly archaic 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century device of the "retardatio" or "retardation," perhaps signaling a moment of fate – Demetrius's course has been set.<sup>110</sup> In the six measures following the theme (elaborating a half-cadence) the tritone occurs in two measures, and in the bridge to the varied repeat it is spun out to form a rising chromatic line, accompanied by a forceful crescendo and leading to the varied repeat, marked *ff*. No wonder that Spohr lamented the repetitive nature of Joachim's theme and its dissonances.

Joachim's compelling dynamics and rhythm further underscore the exceedingly unwieldy nature of the theme, which seems to be at discord with the world and itself. While this theme had been marked *ff* in the opening introduction, it is kept at an uncanny *pp* for the entire first presentation in the exposition, increasing to full dynamics only at the varied repetition (mm. 83-93). Now in full force, *energisch* and reaching *fff*, the music, indeed, reminds us of Joachim's (psychologically acute) words about the Demetrius motive: it breaks out passionately and vehemently as a consequence of having been suppressed previously.

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<sup>110</sup> "Retardation" (from Lat. *retardatio*, a term used in the 17th and 18th centuries): Julian Rushton, "Suspension," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27149> (accessed March 11, 2014).

Hepokoski and Darcy suggest that introductory material is usually “not involved in either the expositional repeat or in the launching of the recapitulatory rotation.”<sup>111</sup> We should note that the exposition remains in significant parts independent from the introduction, despite building from the Demetrius motive an expansive theme. Not only the key of F-sharp minor separates the inner sonata form from the introduction-coda frame. Still, following the passionate outbreak of Demetrius, a short quotation of theme 1b from the opening introduction, again in D major, reminds us of the majestic realm – or of what the two forces are competing over – from the opening of the overture, before leading to a secondary key area in A major.

The A-major secondary thematic complex (mm. 113ff.) introduces a theme of sixteen measures (in sentence structure<sup>112</sup>), with a varied repeat of another sixteen measures. Like the Demetrius theme, the secondary theme does not seem to be able to find a point of stability. The arrival of a root-position cadence is delayed systematically at every possible juncture, already notable from the very beginning: the point of rest that sonata theorists call Medial Caesura [MC] (an articulation before the secondary theme, usually emphasizing scale degree III or v of the expected theme). Here the music hangs

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<sup>111</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 292.

<sup>112</sup> E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 69.

in the air - after a diminished triad of d-sharp-f-sharp-a – and we hear only the note a, extended with a fermata. Joachim’s MC articulation leaves wide open what the S theme will bring. Let us briefly investigate Joachim’s secondary theme and its literary connection.

### *The Secondary Area: “Scene of Marfa”?*

In Joachim’s 1860s composition “Scene der Marfa aus Schiller’s unvollendetem Drama Demetrius (für Mezzo-Sopran und Orchester)” we find a work from the 1860s that shares much with this overture: the topic of Demetrius, and the use of the triton (above the pitch e), with which the tutti (first violins) enter.

**Allegro energico**

Violin I

Mezzo-S. Marfa: Es ist mein Sohn ich kann nicht daran zweifeln

**Example 68, Joachim, *Scene of Marfa* (1869), Violin Tutti Opening and Mezzo-Soprano Entrance**

One of a small number of pieces Joachim composed after 1860, *Marfa* is especially fascinating to us because it throws some light on the question about when Joachim knew Schiller’s fragment and, further, which scenes from Schiller he seemed to have favored. The scene of Marfa that he chose, indeed, is one of the most intense scenes, continuing the play’s essential conflict of honesty versus lying. Joachim’s text of the opening line

reads: "Es ist mein Sohn ich kann nicht daran zweifeln" ("It is my son, I cannot doubt it"). It refers to the words that Marfa, the "real" mother of Demetrius, says in a long monologue, trying to convince herself – in spite of the fact that her son has died fifteen years earlier – that her son is alive and that she will recognize him as her son. Thus she would have legitimized him in the eyes of Moscow and his whole kingdom. But when he comes to her as his last resort, having discovered that he is not who he thought he was, and finds himself dependent now on Marfa's acceptance, she follows her conscience: She rejects him as her son. Marfa's courage to tell the truth before Demetrius and a whole nation – a decisive scene in Schiller's play – deeply affected Joachim, an issue to which we return toward the end of this chapter.

Could Joachim's handling of the secondary theme in the overture point to Schiller's scene of Marfa?<sup>113</sup> Could her refusal to utter the words that Demetrius so desperately wants to hear – on which his future depends – perhaps be represented by Joachim's repeated gesture of denial of harmonic closure (Ex. 69).

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<sup>113</sup> The character of Marva also appears in Grimm's play but has a more peripheral function than in Schiller's play, as Grimm's play does not portray Demetrius's attempt to seek help – in his inevitable situation – from Marva but has the pretender, instead, capitulate, convinced by the "true" heir's legitimacy.

Theme (sentence structure): presentation

*ff* *dolce* *cresc.* *molto espressivo* *pp*

Theme, varied repeat of presentation

Theme, continuation

*<mf>* *molto espressivo*

Continuation (continued)

*mf dim.*

*dolce* *pp*

**Example 69, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture (mm. 111-128)**

While the first four-measure-presentation (Ex. 69, mm. 113-116) of this sixteen-measure sentence structure looks harmonically unequivocal, with its seeming pull to an A major cadence – where the soprano line has D-C-sharp-B-A – the harmonic underpinnings of this theme are highly ambiguous and deny closure in A major, most clearly in m. 117, where we hear B major (with an added seventh) instead of the desired A major. Joachim repeats the progression through G-sharp-B-E (m. 119), A-sharp-C-sharp-E and B minor (m. 120) and ends again on a dominant-seventh chord, E-G-sharp-

B-D (m. 120). Having so far avoided a resolution to A major at least twice (mm. 117 and 121), he continues to thwart the expected cadence on A major. Instead, he proceeds two steps further with this ambiguous theme. First, he presents a consequent phrase over an expressive ascending chromatic bass line, and then he restates the theme from the beginning but this time in varied form, spinning a secondary theme complex of sixteen measures overall.

As the bass line moves chromatically from A-sharp-B to C-sharp-D, and from C-sharp-D to D-sharp (over the diminished chord D-sharp-F-sharp-A, mm. 121-124, see “theme continuation” in Ex. 69), constantly in search of A major, it finally approaches A major through a barely confident, second inversion of A major. But still searching, the music repeats the chromatic rising progression, again, without reaching a solidified A major: Joachim gives us, at the end of this twenty-four-measure secondary thematic complex, a hushed vision of A major, *pianissimo*, and on the third beat (m. 134, Ex. 70).



**Example 70, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Varied Repeat of the Secondary Theme, Beginning (mm. 134-140)**

There now ensues a varied repetition of the secondary theme, disguised by lyrical eighth-note figurations, full of fantasy – one of Joachim’s trademarks.<sup>114</sup> They modulate briefly to F major, before returning, with the closing theme already heard in the introduction, to a confirmation of A major. Then the opening of the slow introduction returns with its grand-scale majestic chords, which bridge over to the development. It is perhaps noteworthy that Joachim does not use the Demetrius material to end the exposition but rather the material from the very opening.

### 3.3.3 Development

Here we reach the heart of the overture. Focusing the developmental process first on the Demetrius motive, Joachim combines highly dramatic energy with “trapped motives” and excessive repetitions, which here, as in the *Hamlet* Overture and other works,<sup>115</sup> lead to a paradox: the music moves forward incessantly while the harmonic motion remains more or less paralyzed. But the most expressive section of the development, in fact, seems to relate to the secondary theme – or Marfa’s scene – which

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<sup>114</sup> A good example is Joachim’s *Notturmo* Op. 12, and his *Elegische Ouvertüre, dem Andenken Heinrich von Kleists gewidmet* Op. 13 (especially the varied repeat of the secondary theme in the exposition).

<sup>115</sup> *Abendglocken* Op. 5, Overture to *Henry IV*, among others.

might, indeed, portray Demetrius's rejection of having been denied the legitimacy he needs in order to reign. The central motive of the *Demetrius* Overture is a four-note chromatic motive, a-b-flat-d-c-sharp (later transposed, see m. 257), which Joachim derives from the secondary theme, here in G major (m. 253 ff.). Joachim composes out Demetrius's struggle using the most vivid notational means, in which this four-note motive is repeated in different stages of augmentation, showing his slow decay in the tragic final scenes, after his negative encounter with Marfa.

<b>Development</b>		
mm. 180-199	Theme 1a, 1b, and "Demetrius" motive	D-flat major (modulating to B-flat).
mm. 211-261	Secondary theme	C major, G major, G minor
mm. 258-327	Chromatic four-note motive Motivic augmentation process	E minor, modulating to D major and F-sharp minor

**Figure 7, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Diagram of the Development**

We begin the development with the majestic opening theme 1a, transposed to D-flat major, an unusual choice to bring back introductory material,<sup>116</sup> but relevant in the context of the entire overture – D-flat major is, enharmonically, the dominant of F-sharp minor and a third above the mediant A major, and so reinforces those keys. Besides hearing a short reference to the introductory theme 1b (the triadic ascending motive from m. 3) in F major, we also encounter the secondary theme from the exposition,

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<sup>116</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 292.



passing through the keys of C, G and g. At m. 261 Joachim begins in earnest the process of the development. Tovey, in fact, pointed out in his review, which we mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, a passage of “augmentation,” which pertains to the development and might be one element that provoked Joachim’s retrospective comment: “it’s awful!—an attempt at psychological music!” Tovey’s passage continues as follows:

I did not find it [Joachim’s attempt at psychological music] very awful; and the psychology of it was good enough to prove that Joachim understood Liszt and his Weimar group of revolutionaries through and through before he renounced their ways. I well remember a passage in which a theme grew, by “augmentation,” to a gigantic size, in a way vividly suggestive of the horror of the self-deceived imposter as he found both his power helpless and his helplessness growing to his own destruction.<sup>117</sup>

As we will now investigate, the four-note chromatic motive dominates a long passage of motivic augmentation, beginning in E minor and modulating to D major and eventually to F-sharp minor. In this critical passage Joachim focuses exclusively on the four-note chromatic motive, a-b-flat-d-c-sharp (Ex. 71), and its journey towards extinction.



**Example 71, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Four-note Motive (m. 261)**

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<sup>117</sup> Tovey, 229.

The motive tries to move on, over slight harmonic shifts, but gets “trapped” – or transformed into a circular repetitive pattern – in repetition for fully twenty-three measures, thereby losing, as it were, its purpose and goal. Eventually the motive frees itself from the repetitions, but instead of leading to the recapitulation or some goal-oriented path, a process of motivic augmentation begins (Ex. 72): from a harmonic rhythm of a quarter note, it is transformed before our eyes into larger and larger size, each time doubling in rhythmic value and duration, from a quarter note to a half note (four measures), then to a whole note (eight measures), and finally to two measures per note (eight measures).



Example 72, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Augmentation Process of the Four Note Motive (mm. 293, 394-395, 298-301, 306-313)

Vividly and like a scene evolving before our eyes, the four-note motive's life-force is drawn out and sapped, as if against its will, as if by fate. That Joachim has composed out the slow decay of what seems to portray the main character, Demetrius, will become evident in the recapitulation where the augmentation is also applied to the primary theme of Demetrius, rendering it almost unrecognizable.

In the midst of his intense work with the *Demetrius* Overture, on December 22, 1853, Joachim wrote a letter to his friend Brahms, possibly hinting at this striking event in the development: "The Schubert symphony will wait until you come. Likewise my new overture, which grows like a giant."<sup>118</sup> The "gigantic" growth Joachim mentions may relate to his progress on the composition or to the augmentation of the four-note motive. But to understand this passage fully, and its dueling forces unleashed against one another, with one force eventually gaining the upper hand, we have to consult Schiller's plot and Joachim's thoughts about one of Schiller's most significant tropes.

We have mentioned earlier that one possible reason Joachim may have been fascinated with Schiller's *Demetrius* is the playwright's emphasis on "Gerechtigkeitsliebe," his love of justice, and his emphasis on truth.<sup>119</sup> When composing

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<sup>118</sup> "Die Schubertsche Sinfonie will auf dein Kommen warten. Ebenso eine neue Ouvertüre von mir, die riesig wächst," Moser, ed., *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, I:22, letter to Brahms of December 12, 1853.

<sup>119</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:118, letter to Gisela of December 3-4, 1853.

the *Demetrius* overture, Joachim's thoughts clearly turned to Schiller, for he remarked to Gisela about the "the inner worth of the great man Schiller, for whom the love of justice raged in his breast to become a fatalistic force, which demonically directed his entire life; from the majesty of thought, that untroubled by every hindrance trusted the quietly swelling kernel of truth; from Schiller's respect for the individual from universal love."<sup>120</sup> The idea of a being guided by a demonic force, by a fatalistic love of justice which, all challenges withstanding, adheres to the growing sense of truth – for reasons of a higher morality like Schiller's universal love – can be applied to the struggle of forces in the development. The love of justice – and above all the victory of truth and justice – are precisely the central motives. The voice of morality speaking from Demetrius's struggle and downfall might have been what fascinated both Schiller and Joachim. What made Schiller's version differ from Grimm's and many others was that fate brings such a heavy load of change to one individual's life – all events of a life develop in one direction only to be proven "wrong" by fate, as one review from 1856 summarized:

In his belief of being the true heir, [the false] Demetrius (so Schiller has it) raises his banner, [...] against Godunov (the murderer of the true Demetrius, which the

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 118. "... innern Werth des hohen Menschen Schiller, dem die Gerechtigkeitsliebe zum Fatum in der Brust sich aufgethürmt hat, das dämonisch sein ganzes Leben leitet – von der Majestät des Gedankens, die unbekümmert um alles Hindernis still schwellenden Wahrheitskeim vertraut – von Schillers Achtung des Einzelnen aus Alliebe."

false Demetrius does not know), engages the king of Poland, lifts the beautiful daughter of a Polish noble to his throne, sends for his supposed mother, Marfa, [...] to see and to acknowledge him, proceeds from victory to victory [...] until he finds he has been deceived, - that he has been but a tool in the hands of another. With this discovery, the character and fate of Demetrius suddenly change. Unwilling to lose what he has gained, he, until now deceived, resolves henceforth to become a deceiver. He kills the man who knows his secret. Distrust fills his soul, cruelty dictates his actions; he becomes a tyrant. But tyranny begets opposition; the popular indignation is roused against him; a conspiracy breaks out; he falls.<sup>121</sup>

And Schiller himself observed: "That for a long time the false Demetrius conducts himself with good intentions and that the discovery of his nullification changes his entire character, also leads to his catastrophe, is truly dramatic, as is especially the period that precedes this peripeteia, shortly before his entrance as czar."<sup>122</sup>

Schiller's *Demetrius* has the hero move against his "fatum" or fate, which Demetrius eventually can no longer withstand and which causes his fatal end. Schiller portrays Demetrius's progress forward despite the enormous challenges put into his path seemingly from nowhere – that a stranger informs him about his illegitimacy leads to his inner turmoil, his rapid downward spiral, and Demetrius's killing of the person who brought him the catastrophic news. Despite these insurmountable hurdles,

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<sup>121</sup> Schiller's plot (*The Athenaeum*, October 4, 1856, 1210).

<sup>122</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Demetrius*, in *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft* vol. 9, ed. Bernhard Suphan (Weimar: Goethe-Gesellschaft, 1894), 220. "Dass der falsche Demetrius lange Zeit *de bonne foi* handelt und die Entdeckung seiner Nullität seinen ganzen Charakter verändert, auch seine Catastrophe herbeiführt, ist wahrhaft dramatisch; und besonders ist's die Epoche, wie diese Peripetie vorgeht, kurz vor seinem zaarischen Einzuge."

Demetrius continues to reign, which causes even more of a hateful backlash against him. When the motive expands, it is as if the voice of humanity, justice and truth interferes with and slows down the energy of the four-note motive, impeding Demetrius's forward progress, which climaxes in the recapitulation. Demetrius's fatum is perceived, in the end, a result and the consequence of his own unexpected illegitimacy and the existence of a "real" heir to the throne, which is how this overture began: as a struggle between two opposing forces. This duality also determines the events leading to, and the most dramatic points in, the recapitulation: first, a premature "false" recapitulation; second, a motivically distorted recapitulation of the primary theme; and third, a "wrong-key" entrance of the secondary theme.

### 3.3.4. Recapitulation

Recapitulation (mm. 327-437, excluding coda)		
mm. 306 ff.	"False recapitulation" (theme 1b from the introduction)	D major
mm. 327-342	Augmented primary theme	F-sharp minor
mm. 370-373	"Wrong key" return, secondary theme	D major
mm. 374-397	Secondary theme	F-sharp major
mm. 398 ff.	Varied repeat	
m. 437	End of recapitulation	F-sharp minor

**Example 73, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Diagram of the Recapitulation**

The first dramatic event of the recapitulation belongs, strictly speaking, to the development. It is the premature “false” recap in m. 306. It presents theme 1b from the exposition, which reminds the listener of the great F-sharp minor – D major conflict in this overture. Here, at the end of the development, D major behaves as if it were the tonic. Eventually the real recapitulation occurs but only by insinuating itself into the argument. The primary theme in the real, F-sharp minor, recapitulation grows naturally out of the motivic augmentation process of the development and presents itself in grotesque distortion. While the four-note motive derived from the secondary theme had been distorted in the development, this process is now extended to the Demetrius theme. Being augmented, it does not recall the sharp rhythm of its presentation in the exposition and has even less the character of an event than the “false” recapitulation of theme 1b in D major, again underlining that the F-sharp minor and D major conflict is not yet solved.

Joachim’s recap in *Demetrius*, indeed, markedly conflicts with traditional expectations such as those Spohr would have expected to see fulfilled; Spohr described his first impression of the overture’s form as “alienating” (“befremdend”).<sup>123</sup> If already in Schubert’s world, as Schmidt-Beste explains, the “event” of the “breakthrough” of the

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<sup>123</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:281, letter from Spohr to Joachim of April 23, 1855.

tonic in the recapitulation is not an “event” anymore,<sup>124</sup> in Joachim’s sonata form we experience the recapitulation as an anti-climax, which is, in compositional terms, achieved through traditional sonata-form signifiers of weakness. The strong “false” recapitulation in D major in *ff* precedes the “real” recap in *pp*, the non-root position F-sharp harmony at the real recapitulation sounds as far from “home” as a tonic can sound,<sup>125</sup> and the theme shows signs of distortion rendering it almost beyond recognition. In short, the recap begins with a shock – an implosion. But nevertheless, because the “opening key, mood, and sound are replicated” fairly closely, this is, indeed, Joachim’s beginning of the recapitulation (Ex. 74).<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Schmidt-Beste, 131.

<sup>125</sup> The recapitulation has a strong  $I^{6/4}$  feeling (inherent in the primary motive also in the exposition) because the theme dwells on the b-sharp-f-sharp tritone, whereby the b-sharp resolves up to c-sharp, c-sharp figuring as the bass note of a second inversion F-sharp minor.

<sup>126</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 231.



Primary theme  
in augmentation

$p < >$

$f$

$ff$

$fz$

**Example 74, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, Augmented Primary Theme in the Bass, Recapitulation (mm. 327-342)**

The other striking event of the recapitulation is the secondary theme. Here we revisit the implications of Joachim's choice of a minor-key sonata form: "The possibility of a tonic-minor-to-tonic-major trajectory (or the represented inability to attain that

transformation),” which either way “is rich in metaphorical implication,” as Hepokoski and Darcy assert.<sup>127</sup> The first attempt of the secondary theme is represented by D major, as if the power of D major from the introduction-coda frame were claiming some say in the F-sharp minor inner sonata form, suggesting that, there having been enough F-sharp minor, the tragedy should resolve finally in the key of the overture, D major. The way Joachim moves from F-sharp minor of the primary theme to D major, however, is not through two common tones, as we would expect, which makes D major as a “wrong-key” entrance of S more significant.<sup>128</sup> After the presentation of the recapitulation of P in F-sharp minor (m. 327), Joachim first offers the varied primary theme in C-sharp minor. Because of the tritone inherent in the original (expositional) guise of the primary theme (between b-sharp and the tonic f-sharp) Joachim is able to move from his (varied) primary theme in C-sharp minor – which creates a tritone between g and the tonic c-sharp - easily to his D-major goal via a progression of: C-sharp minor, g-c-sharp-e, and dominant-seventh chord of D major (in third inversion, g-a-(b)-c-sharp-e) to D major.

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 306.

<sup>128</sup> Indeed, although the key choices of this overture – its D major frame, its F-sharp minor sonata form “within” and the secondary area in III (of F-sharp) – point to an interest in third-relations, Joachim avoids here in the recapitulation working with third-relations on a micro-level, as evident from his progression from C-sharp minor to D major, the “wrong-key” recapitulation.

But this D-major beginning turns out to have been merely what Hepokoski and Darcy term a “wrong key”<sup>129</sup> entrance of the secondary theme, which then corrects its path: after the D-major insinuation of the S theme we shift nonchalantly (with only the last note in 373, E-sharp, giving it away) to F-sharp major, the real key of the recapitulation.<sup>130</sup> But as in the exposition, this theme encounters heavy complications and with continuously struggles to resolve in an unambiguous harmonic root-tonic feeling. At least for the moment it seems that the F-sharp minor sonata form – through the F-sharp major recapitulation of the secondary theme – is going to trace a *per aspera ad astra* trajectory, as many minor-key sonata forms do.<sup>131</sup> As Hepokoski and Darcy claim: “Once the recapitulatory S begins in the tonic major, the local assumption is that the positive outcome is in the offing, and indeed, if S is strictly transposed a major mode

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<sup>129</sup> Hepokoski and Darcy, 237.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 238: “There are cases when the recapitulatory S is sounded in the ‘wrong key’ and least for a few bars proceeds as if all were well. Shortly into the theme, though, the ‘wrong-key’ trajectory is aborted, and the music ‘backs up’ to restart S in the proper, tonic key. Thus, the recapitulatory S begins twice, first in the wrong key, then in the right one. (The alternative, found in the first movement of Beethoven’s “Waldstein” Sonata, would be to correct the generically improper tonality en route, without backing up).” The former strategy applies to Joachim, whose theme, in sentence structure, repeats the first two measures in any case and thus shifts the repeat of the first two measures to F-sharp major.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 306: Hepokoski and Darcy speak of minor-key sonata forms as “bearing an additional burden. This is that of the minor mode itself, generally interpretable within the sonata tradition as a sign of a troubled condition seeking transformation (emancipation) into the parallel major mode. Since many minor-mode sonata structures do attain a major-mode ESC in the recapitulation and do sustain that major mode for the rest of the composition, the sonata process can function as a strategy capable of transforming tonic minor into tonic major.”

ESC (“essential expositional closure”) will happen automatically in the major.”<sup>132</sup> But Joachim decides to revert back to the minor, achieving an ESC in the minor; he ends the recapitulation of the inner form in the harmonic minor of f-sharp, leaving the hope for resolution to the major to the coda.<sup>133</sup> If the recapitulation fulfills the promise of the exposition in a minor-mode sonata form, it will, according to Hepokoski and Darcy, offer a cadential closure (“ESC”) in the parallel major thus “decisively emancipating the tonic minor.”<sup>134</sup> The question we have to ask, then, is why the F-sharp failed, why the major failed, and how it failed.

The moment of “failure” to confirm the achieved F-sharp minor occurs through the closing theme, which Joachim has used several times already in this overture as a rhetorical device to express doubt about how to proceed. Essentially ending on a half-cadence, the closing theme suggests, rhythmically and harmonically, a state of waiting for closure.

Beginning with the move from the current tonic F-sharp major (second inversion) to a long-held F-sharp diminished-seventh chord (third inversion) it establishes the

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 312.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 308: the appearance of the major – first D, then F-sharp - on one hand suggests the *per aspera ad astra* trajectory but on the other hand also shows the music’s inability to maintain this achievement of major – we drift back to where we began – to F-sharp minor.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 311.

harmonic ambiguity, which is solidified by the ensuing rests, leaving us hanging in the air. The G-sharp major (seventh) and the following B-sharp major diminished-seventh chord bring little remedy but rather a dramatic outbreak on a *fortissimo* chord – a B minor (second inversion) chord, which subsequently alternates with C-sharp major in a consecutive stepwise pattern, up and down. The listener is desperately awaiting a conclusion of the unfinished cadence, hoping for F-sharp minor to arrive, which Joachim intimates – through a minor third of f-sharp and a – (Ex. 75, third to last bar) but without clearly granting us a sense of closure.



**Example 75, Joachim, *Demetrius* Overture, before the ESC,<sup>135</sup> i.e. the Closing of the Recapitulation in F-sharp Minor (mm. 426-437)**

Because our hopes from the F-sharp major S theme have been utterly disappointed through the return to F-sharp minor after the secondary theme, two

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<sup>135</sup> Hepokoski's and Darcy's terminology is best described in *ibid.*, 17.

questions are unanswered. What happened to F-sharp major from the recapitulation? How is the overture going to end and the large conflict between D major and F-sharp minor resolved? If Joachim had followed the precedents of his *Hamlet* and *Kleist Overtures*, *Demetrius* would have ended with a dark (F-sharp) minor coda, which would lead to the overall trajectory of *Demetrius*: [- +] {-[+ -]}, to use Hepokoski and Darcy's classification: a "Minor Sonata form with mixtures only in recap space: negative outcome."<sup>136</sup> Joachim has accomplished an introduction in D major and an entire sonata form in F-sharp minor; he *could* end in F-sharp minor (and compose a short ending to Ex. 75). But Joachim diverges here from the course he took in other overtures: he presents a double confirmation (a two-part coda) in D major.

### 3.4 Joachim's Coda, the Fate of F-sharp minor, and Resolution

The coda begins with a new tempo marking, *Molto animato*, and quickly turns to D major, recalling the opening triadic motive (1b) before in m. 470 the slow introduction returns, as a second part of the coda.

Coda, Parts I and II (mm. 438-531)		
<i>Molto animato</i>		
mm. 438-454	Transition to D major	
mm. 454-469	Theme 1b and fragments of "Demetrius"	D major

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 313.

<i>Più moderato e maestoso</i>		
mm. 470-493	Lyrical theme from the introduction	D major
mm. 503-508	Closing theme	Dominant of D major
mm. 508-524	Theme 1b and head of the “Demetrius” motive	D major

Figure 8, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Diagram of the Coda

Its new tempo marking, *Più moderato e maestoso*, confirms D with the majestic S-theme (distinct from the secondary theme in the exposition!) from the slow introduction, now fully orchestrated by the winds, brass, and strings (Ex. 76).

**Più moderato e maestoso**

Example 76, Joachim, *Demetrius Overture*, Final Coda in D Major (mm. 470-477)

Significantly the *Maestoso e fieramente* from m. 1 of the overture has now been divested of the *fieramente*. The clear turn to D major here brings relief but at the same time does not answer the questions lingering from a sonata form movement in F-sharp

minor. After the two-part coda, or the coda and the return of the slow introduction at the end and the solid confirmation of D major, we cannot help but wonder what the experience in this inner sonata form, with its initial dual confrontation in the introduction, its never-resolving secondary theme, its dramatic built-up (and augmentation process) in the development, its imploding recapitulation, and strangely heroic coda means? Apparently, the events of the movement assist us in viewing a heroic character subjected by a higher force – or fate – to his fall, which elicits in him a response, drawn in tones with highly efficient, psychologically colored nuances. Joachim fully brings to life the inner turmoil of the pretender, his inner psychology – expressing excruciating, multi-level conflict – after the fateful change of his path.

A huge power conflict materializes before our eyes, bringing into focus the dramatic portrayal of the development. It seems that the repetitive brooding represented by the four-note motive in the development and its eventual growth can stand for an image of Demetrius's growing horror. The tragic fall, the "negative" outcome, occurs in the recapitulation. The ESC in F-sharp minor, where after a glimpse of hope Joachim abandons the major mode says farewell to F-sharp minor and makes room for the overture's close in D major, seems to overlap with Demetrius's end and the new reign taken over by the pretender.



One of the most striking events is the secondary theme of the recapitulation and its attempt to pass through the “wrong key” – or under a “false identity” – an attempt that fails because the truth comes to light. If we personify F-sharp minor and D major, then F-sharp minor is clearly Demetrius the pretender while D major is the “real” legitimate heir. But D major can also stand as a representation of the goal – of the royal, grand, majestic life of the czar – alluded to already in m. 1. This goal, however, is eventually denied to Demetrius: the key of D major, and not F-sharp minor, wins the battle.

But if the over-dimensional length of this lyrical theme and its constant denial of closure has stood for Marfa’s refusal to grant legitimacy to Demetrius, who is not her son, we can see F-sharp major – the key to which F-sharp minor from the exposition is transformed – as Demetrius’s second and most pressing encounter with Marfa, in his renewed hope to be recognized by her, once again denied.

Considering Joachim’s form-within-the-form and probing Hepokoski’s and Darcy’s suggestion that composers can subordinate “the interior sonata [form] . . . to the outward container,”<sup>137</sup> we could argue that the D major in the coda represents neither a depiction of Demetrius’s tragic fall nor some sort of moral elevation or *Gerechtigkeitssinn*, which the listener is supposed to gain from such an outcome but instead the outcome of

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

Joachim's personal struggle as he was going through the compositional process of *Demetrius*. But to understand this, we have to return once more to Joachim's personal life between December 1853 and April 1854, which will throw light on his motivation and inspiration, a driving factor in "psychological music": Gisela von Arnim.

The following quote reveals that the *Demetrius* Overture was written for Gisela, and that every note entailed a "Herzensgeschichte": As we shall see, not only Friedrich Schiller and Herman Grimm engaged Joachim's creative process in composing the overture, but also Gisela von Arnim, as this comment reveals: "But your letters, marvelous one, are for me many future overtures to be written, full of the most beautiful sounds!!! Write a few words for the sake of the notes not yet written, your J J."<sup>138</sup> A few months later, after the overture was written, Joachim continued: "How much I am looking forward to having Your Demetrius Overture be played once for you; every note is part of a heartfelt story."<sup>139</sup> As we have seen, Joachim spent the Christmas holiday with Hans von Bülow, and not with Gisela, because he had been too proud, which he

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<sup>138</sup> "Aber Deine Briefe, Herrliche, das sind mir lauter kommende Ouvertüren voll schönster Klänge!!! Schreib' ein paar Worte den künftigen Noten zu Liebe, Deinem JJ." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 13, letter of December 11, 1853.

<sup>139</sup> "Wie freue ich mich darauf Dir Deine Demetrius-Ouvertüre einmal spielen zu lassen; es ist in jeder Note ein Stückchen Herzens=Geschichte." Ibid., 44, letter of the summer [June to August] 1854.

regretted. His pride undermined his own feelings for Gisela, which he had thereby suppressed, not least because of his duplicity toward Herman Grimm.

We could ask again, what were the “Mordgedanken in fis moll” about? It seems that for Joachim the “Mordgedanken” – as he assumed the role of the angry Demetrius and at the piano<sup>140</sup> or in his room to compose – helped him to sort through his issues of pride, dishonesty, and perhaps competition (with Herman), using composing as an outlet but at the same time contributing to the dark, subjective tone of the overture. Indeed, there is almost no way to separate the two literary and autobiographical layers of program injected into his overture. The Freudian (post-Joachimian) idea of psychological transference has already been mentioned, and can serve as an analogy, albeit an anachronistic one. Two months after completing *Demetrius*, Joachim wrote:

Beethoven is a deep connoisseur of the human soul. His themes live with his soul as his only friends; they accompany him everywhere as trusted companions, and unwillingly stamp themselves with the total warmth of his rich feelings. Thus the plurality, the liveliness of the shapes that captivate us so wonderfully in his developments (development—a dreadful word; it should be called a feeling through!), that breathe on us from his works as if long familiar to us!<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Joachim often fantasized at the piano, which he used as an aid for composing, *Joachim Briefe*, I:38.

<sup>141</sup> “Beethoven ist [...] ein [...] tiefer Kenner der menschlichen Seele. [...] Seine Themen leben als seine einzigen Freunde sein ganzes Seelenleben mit; sie begleiten ihn als Vertraute überall hin, und so prägt sich ihnen unwillkürlich die ganze Wärme seines reichen Empfindens ein. Daher die Mannigfaltigkeit, die Lebendigkeit der Gestaltungen, die uns so wunderbar an seine Durchführungen (Durchführung: ein häßlich Wort; es sollte Durchfühlung heißen!) fesselt, die

These words, written in April 1853 in a letter to his friend Woldemar Bargiel, can perhaps enlighten the manner in which Joachim's "psychological music" served as an outlet for him. Joachim indeed felt that his works were some kind of objects absorbing and reflecting his inner life. In the same letter Joachim wrote: "I am sending you, then, an overture, which had been my confidant for a long time and shared within me many metamorphoses until reaching its current form."<sup>142</sup> We can also add to our conclusion of *Abendglocken* that in addition to "detecting and saving emotions from the abyss," the composer used his music to *feel through* whatever his daily life confronted, transferring in effect the "warmth" of his experience into his music, just as his remark about Beethoven suggested above.

There is, in fact, a very similar work that elicits psychological transference – Hans von Bülow's *Stimmungsbild Nirwana* – and allows us to view and compare Joachim's *Demetrius* as an autobiographical overture. Both von Bülow's and Joachim's overtures, interestingly, were written and intended as typical theatrical overtures. Neither, to our

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uns so altgeahnt aus seinen Werken entgegenathmet!" *Joachim Briefe*, I:47, letter to Woldemar Bargiel of April 1853.

<sup>142</sup> "Ich schicke Ihnen denn eine Ouvertüre zu, die lange Zeit hier mein Vertrauter war, und die eine Menge Metamorphosen bis zu ihrer jetzigen Gestalt in mir mitgelebt hat." *Ibid.*, I:45.

knowledge, was performed according to its originally intended purpose.<sup>143</sup> Already in 1854, the year of composition, the overture *Nirwana*, as it appears in von Bülow's correspondence, is discussed using a rather pessimistic vocabulary, ranging from "fantasie sur le suicide"<sup>144</sup> (suicide fantasy), "testament-like,"<sup>145</sup> and later, in a letter to Felix Draeseke, as "a suicide attempt in tones."<sup>146</sup>

Already in April von Bülow revealed to Liszt: "My very dear and illustrious master! But in the case that I shall finish soon a musical daguerreotype of myself (an orchestral piece), I will permit myself to deposit it straight away at your feet."<sup>147</sup> This "musical daguerreotype" turns out to be the *Stimmungsbild Nirwana*, which, although not yet called by this title, already had dark and evidently autobiographical connotations. Perhaps the two friends, Joachim and von Bülow, discussed their

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<sup>143</sup> Bülow's work is based on Karl Ritter's play *Ein Leben im Tode*, which does not exist anymore. See Hinrichsen, 37. The title *Nirwana*, which Bülow chose later, has little or nothing to do with Karl Ritter but rather with the former's Schopenhauer reception, which occurred presumably in the late 1850s. See *Hans von Bülow Briefe*, IV:561.

<sup>144</sup> Birkin, 84.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 84, he cites Marie von Bülow, ed., *Hans von Bülow Briefe*, vols. I-VII (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1895-1908), II:224.

<sup>146</sup> Hinrichsen 37; Marie Bülow, ed. *Hans von Bülow Briefe*, III:463.

<sup>147</sup> "Mon très cher et illustre maître! [...] Mais dans le cas où je terminerais bientôt un daguerreotype musical de moi-même (morceau d'Orchestre) je me permettrai de le déposer aussitôt à vos pieds." *Briefwechsel zwischen Franz Liszt und Hans von Bülow*, ed. La Mara (Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1898), 75-81. Dresden, April 30, 1854.

respective current and planned compositional projects during their shared Christmas holiday. At any rate the comparison between Bülow's "Selbstmordversuch in Tönen" and Joachim's "Mordgedanken in fis moll" seems apt, especially with regard to their shared dark tone and confession-like character. Confirming this perceived link, Liszt also compared Bülow's overture, which he referred to as "Fantasy," to Joachim's *Hamlet* and *Demetrius* Overtures in a letter to Bülow of September 30, 1854: "The two overtures of Joachim, 'Hamlet' and 'Demetrius,' [...] have a certain familiar air with your Fantaisie."<sup>148</sup>

Notwithstanding, it seems that Joachim's overture, in its confessional character, was, in fact, written for Gisela, which we can therefore add as another emblematic work of "psychological music" as we have defined it thus far: a compositional approach, defined through works of the 1850s and their related correspondence, of which the majority were implicitly or explicitly dedicated to Gisela and in which the composer relied heavily on expressing his inner turmoil in relation to her. But the psychological music of the *Demetrius* Overture has a second level of complexity, for the composer clearly was also thinking of a *literary* program. What fascinated Joachim about *Demetrius* was the historical figure, a heroic, young, proud (and tragically ending) character, with

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<sup>148</sup> "...les deux Ouvertures de Joachim, "Hamlet" et "Demétriüs", [...] ont un certain air de famille avec votre Fantaisie." La Mara, 102.

whom the young, proud Joachim could perhaps identify, as expressed in the early version through *fieramente* providing him an ideal platform from which to work through (or feel through) his frustration. This ending would certainly explain in part the heroic D major ending of the overture.

If we can identify three criteria that should apply to a work of Joachim as an example of psychological music, – an extramusical program from an autobiographical context or literary context, the implicit or explicit dedication of the work to Gisela, and supporting evidence from correspondence that marks the work as functional in terms of a psychological “outlet” – then we could assert the following about the *Demetrius* Overture: it has an extramusical program, drawn both from a literary (historical) play *and* from Joachim’s biography, it is dedicated to Gisela implicitly; and it is supported by correspondence that documents how the work helped him work actively through his issues (whether the “Durchführung” was particular prominent in the “Durchführung” remains unclear), and thus conclude that *Demetrius* was another example of psychological music that served him as an outlet.

Hinrichsen described Bülow’s title choice *Nirwana* as pointing to a “position mediating between literary objectification and subjectivity without compromise.”<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> “... zwischen literarischer Objektivierung und kompromißlosem Subjektivismus vermittelnde Position.” Hinrichsen, 37.

Joachim's *Demetrius* Overture seems to mediate between two different positions. On the one hand there is an "uncompromising subjectivity" emanating from the autobiographical layer of documents surrounding the overture (and even of the overture itself), but on the other hand there is a "formal objectification," a deep fascination with sonata form and dramatic meaning, rather than a "literary objectification" – at least concerning Grimm's play – which was just another pathway to gaining Gisela's affection.



## 4. Joseph Joachim and Gisela von Arnim – The Cultural Role Play of Cupid and Psyche

In an epoch-defining watercolor by Johann Arnold, *Quartettabend bei Bettine* from 1854 or 1856 (see Illustration 2),<sup>1</sup> we see Joachim performing, as he often did, in Bettine von Arnim's salon "Unter den Zelten," named after the street of her residence in Berlin,<sup>2</sup> which he frequented several times after meeting Gisela in 1852.



**Illustration 2, Carl Johann Arnold, *Quartettabend bei Bettine* (Freies Deutsches Hochstift)**

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<sup>1</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 95.

<sup>2</sup> Her residence in Berlin, "Unter den Zelten 5," was the cultural center of Berlin in the decades leading up to 1850. It no longer exists. See Petra Wilhelmy, *Der Berliner Salon im 19. Jahrhundert: 1780-1914* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 188.

The painting provides an ideal window into this chapter as it partially fills one of the gaps in our understanding of Joachim in the early to mid-1850s. Before discussing this gap, let us clarify what this painting depicts and how it has been received in recent musicological scholarship.

The painting brings together Goethe, whose altar-like *Goethe-Denkmal*, a plaster monument, is lit in bright white light; Bettine, listening in her armchair to the quartet with an “aura of devotion and the sacred”;<sup>3</sup> and Joachim, the *primarius* of the quartet, who, as Borchard observes, significantly turns his back to the viewer, marking this painting as expressing a “Kunstideal” dedicated only to *insiders*, for, as Borchard continues, only the “initiated” know who is playing.<sup>4</sup> The music sounding here, she conjectures, is that of Beethoven, “the embodiment of absolute music,”<sup>5</sup> as the whole painting implicitly suggests, with Goethe’s monument flooded in light and centered above. In the same vein, Dahlhaus commented on this painting in his chapter “The Metaphysics of Instrumental Music”<sup>6</sup> in the context of Tieck’s and Wackenroder’s ideas about the “religion of art,” an aesthetic wherein the work, as Dahlhaus suggests,

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<sup>3</sup> “Aura der Andacht, des Sakralen.” Borchard, 94.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> “Inbegriff von absoluter Musik.” Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, “The Metaphysics of Instrumental Music,” in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 93.

appeared as a “self-contained musical process,”<sup>7</sup> or, simply put, as a work of “absolute music.”

But let us now return to our gap. One significant being represented in the painting has been mentioned neither by Dahlhaus and Borchard, nor by other authors writing about Joachim and this painting,<sup>8</sup> although no less invisible than Goethe in the *Goethe-Denkmal*: the figure of Psyche, which, although not visible in this watercolor, is represented in the monument, where she stands before Goethe’s lap with a lyre. The mythological figure of Psyche was intimately known to Bettine and Joachim, as it was a figure deeply embedded in the culture of the time, no less than Amor (Lat.: love), who is also known as Cupid (Lat.: desire), or Eros (Greek: love in its plurality), and often linked with Psyche. But what is the significance of Psyche in this painting, especially for Joachim?

Just as Psyche is little noticed by viewers of the Goethe monument, so, too, often overlooked is the subtle literary and cultural role play of Amor and Psyche, which found an outlet in the literary circle of Bettine von Arnim and assumed various forms in letters, letter seals, images, drawings, statues, and other cultural artifacts. The role play

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<sup>7</sup> Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 95.

<sup>8</sup> Meyer’s article “Zum Violinkonzert in einem Satz,” 131, 136, fn. 28, points out the relevance of the von Arnims for Joachim and mentions, but does not discuss in detail, the *Goethe-Denkmal*; nor does Meyer mention Psyche.

commonly aimed at the following purpose: to express sympathy and to draw the attention of someone with whom a romantic liaison was perhaps desired, or surely at least hinted at, but not realized. That Gisela adopted this tradition from her mother, with whom she shared much in many respects,<sup>9</sup> and extended it to her own circle – with Joachim and herself playing the main roles – has not captured scholars' attention thus far. This represents a notable gap and seems to justify situating Joachim and Gisela as not only parts but also active members of an intriguing literary cultural tradition, which is the goal of this chapter.

For this dissertation the general significance of Psyche is two-fold. First, Psyche and Amor figure in a scene within a play written by a member of Joachim's literary circle, namely Gisela. Her drama *Das Herz der Laïs* (1857) served as basis for a piece Joachim composed (see Ch. 5). In this collaborative effort, the scene would have unfolded as a melodrama with pantomime, had it been completed. Thus, the figure of Psyche in *Quartettabend bei Bettine* can stand for Joachim's relatively *unnoticed* but considerable involvement with programmatic signifiers and titles, even though the quartet in the watercolor appears to be promoting "absolute" music, in a conspicuously *noticed* way.

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<sup>9</sup> Borchard, 93.

Second, Psyche (Greek, “breath” or, in popular translation, “soul”) or “Gis-Seele”<sup>10</sup> (Gisela) is the primary dedicatee of Joachim’s music in the 1850s and its initiator – bringing Joachim relief from his inner psychological turmoil but at the same time generating some of the inspiration and musical motives driving his composing. Furthermore, the myth of Psyche appears in some written histories of the soul from the early nineteenth century – which begin with ancient Greek philosophy – allowing us to draw a link between the early philosophical understanding of psychology and the myth.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 35.

<sup>11</sup> by Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 12; 136-136. In the Oxford Encyclopedia Stephen Harrison claims that “The speaking names of its protagonists [Cupid and Psyche], the centrality of curiosity, and several literary echoes of Platonic dialogues on love (*Phaedrus* and *Symposium*) suggest some link with the Platonic doctrine on Love and Soul.” See Stephen Harrison, “Cupid and Psyche,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195170726.001.0001/acref-9780195170726-e-328>. The Platonic doctrine of Love and Soul, in turn – as well as Apuleius – are woven into two works about the history of psychology by the natural scientist/philosopher Carl Carus (Carus, *Geschichte der Psychologie*, vol. 3 in *Nachgelassene Werke* [Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth und Paul Gotthelf Kummer, 1808]) and development of the soul (Carus, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele*, ed. Ferdinand Hand (Pforzheim: Flammer und Hoffmann, 1846)). The *Geschichte der Psychologie*, 292-293, describes the souls evolving in light of the so-called “Chariot analogy” in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, which compares the soul to “a winged wagon or chariot with a driver. In us a driver reigns the chariot; the one horse (the braver soul) is manageable, the other not, since it, of poor lineage, easily presses to the lower ground without proper steering. The complete soul is fully fledged, and rules through the entire earth; another has lost its wings, is unfledged, and hovers around until it finds a body through which something complete is formed, which we call a mortal beast. The plumage of the soul takes nourishment and grows from the beautiful, the wise and good, or the divine, to wherever the plumage lifts us up.” (“[Plato vergleicht die Seele mit] einem geflügelten Wagen oder Gespann und dessen Führer. In uns

These two points imply that *Quartettabend bei Bettine* symbolizes a clash about how history represents Joachim: Was he a violinist in the service of art, as the “priest of

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zügelt ein Führer das Gespann; das eine Ross (die muthigere Seele) ist lenksam, das Andere nicht, weil es, von schlechter Abstammung, leicht zum niedern Boden herabdrückt, ohne gehörige Lenkung. [...] Die vollkommene Seele ist befiedert, und waltet durch die ganze Welt; eine Andre hat ihre Flügel verloren, ist entfiedert, und schwebt umher, bis sie einen Leib findet, wodurch ein Ganzes entsteht, das man ein sterbliches Thier nennt. Das Gefieder der Seele nährt sich und wächst durch das Schöne, Weise und Gute, oder das Göttliche, als wohin die Kraft des Gefieders uns hebt.”) Plato’s ideas about love/soul were part of the cultural heritage – of the world of ideas – that shaped and influenced the creation and development of early and modern psychology. Plato’s ideas had an influence on the myth of Cupid and Psyche, and the way this myth was understood, and both – both Plato’s ideas and the myth – had an influence on the thinking of those, like Carl Gustav Carus, who developed psychology as an academic discipline. An academic discipline not only arises out of research and study, but also out of a cultural heritage – a set of ideas and narratives and associations – that shape the thinking of those who carry out the research. Plato’s description of the soul’s journey, its challenges on the way and their overcoming, and that it is symbolized by “Gefieder” [plumage], is closely related to the story of Psyche, often represented with wings, who also goes on her journey of metamorphosis from a human to a goddess. In *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele*, 293, on the other hand, Carus speaks of the “feeling of love in relation to other feelings and to mankind in general” (“Liebesgefühl ferner in Beziehung zu andern Gefühlen und zum Menschen überhaupt”) and notes that “in the emotions severely impacted by love there will be neither what we have called the zenith, nor what we have called the nadir, neither the free lively balance of the soul nor the apathy of it but rather, between joy and sadness, and also feelings of love applied in other directions and hatred, the soul navigates the whole spectrum of the emotions [...] for which reason the ancients have come up with manifold images and allegories for this condition, and namely the butterfly tortured by Amor with the torch is frequently evoked for such conditions.” (“In dem von heftiger Liebe ergriffenen Gemüth wird weder das, was wir den Zenith, noch das, was wir den Nadir der Gefühlswelt genannt haben, weder das freie lebendige Gleichgewicht der Seele, noch die Apathie derselben vorkommen, sondern zwischen Freude und Betrübniß, zwischen auch nach andern Richtungen sich ausbreitender Liebe und zwischen Hass, wird die Magnetgabel des Seelenlebens um die ganze Windrose der Gefühlswelt [...] schwingen [...], weshalb denn schon die Alten vielfältig Bilder und Gleichnisse für diesen Zustand ersannen, und namentlich den von Amor mit der Fackel gequälten Schmetterling häufig als Symbol solcher Zustände wiederholten.”)

art,"<sup>12</sup> championing the works of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Or was he a composer of the 1850s, who not only composed a work to a text about Psyche in 1856 (roughly around the time of the watercolor, see Ch. 5), but who also used literary ideas freely as inspiration, and as a sometimes "hidden" but often perceptible program for his music? Joachim, we could argue, did not have to decide between two sharply divided aesthetic approaches because they were not yet sharply divided. Personally and aesthetically, he was bound up in a struggle between what would later be called "absolute" and "program" music, a struggle marked, at least until 1855, by a permeable rather than a strict separation of ideas, which was possible before, but not after, Joachim's private "Absagebrief" to Liszt of 1857,<sup>13</sup> or the official divide of 1860. One task of this dissertation is to present Joachim as a composer of various works with mixed extramusical elements (none of the works discussed in these chapters lacks an explicit or implicitly acknowledged program or textual/literary component), and thereby to offer an alternative view to the predominant reception of Joachim as violinist. And *Quartettabend bei Bettine* reminds us of this task, which we might also describe as, in search of Psyche.

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<sup>12</sup> Borchard, 58.

<sup>13</sup> Alan Walker, "The War of the Romantics," in *Franz Liszt. The Weimar Years, 1848-1861* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 338 ff.

*Psychologische Musik* – If understood as an autobiographical compositional approach directly related to Joachim's intensely romantic relationship with Gisela von Arnim.<sup>14</sup> *Psychologische Musik* seems to call for an investigation of the (auto-) biographical element surrounding Joachim's works especially because the most productive phase of his life aligns with the time when he was romantically involved with Gisela von Arnim. If *Abendglocken* marked the year that began this relationship – the G-sharp-E-A motive having been conceived 1852 – this chapter discusses a period close to its end. In 1857 a silence of almost two years begins, after which the relationship never returns to what it was before.

We will plumb Joachim's letters to reveal the subjective layers of "psychological music" – via an interdisciplinary journey that consults mythological themes present in Joachim's and Gisela's letters, which, despite anticipating C. G. Jung's approach some decades later, was not completely foreign to the thinking of the mid-1850s, as evident from Richard Wagner's words:

God and gods are the first creations of the human poetic force: in them man depicts the essence of natural phenomena as derived by a cause; but with this cause he unwillingly grasps nothing other than his own human essence, in which this poetic cause alone is grounded.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*; the unpublished letters of Gisela von Arnim to Joseph Joachim are kept at the Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Wagner, *Oper und Drama*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Leipzig: J. J. Weber, 1869), 141.



Or, as one scholar rephrased Wagner's words: myth represents "an explanatory system [...] one that sees reality – history if you will – with reference to myth."<sup>16</sup> Most important, myth, or rather, one particular mythological figure, Psyche, offered not only a role model for how women artists/creators/authors like Bettine and Gisela von Arnim viewed themselves,<sup>17</sup> where Psyche functioned as "guide for female authorship" but, above all, the Cupid and Psyche model offered a key to a understanding the idea of artistic "partnership."<sup>18</sup> But if, according to one scholar, the "lover" was "exchangeable" for Bettine and invented only so that she could view, as in a "mirror," the ideal of "her own higher nature,"<sup>19</sup> Gisela was more than a muse mirroring Joachim's "own higher nature" – and thereby sparking his creativity – because apparently she was not exchangeable, as Joachim's drastically reduced compositional output after 1859 shows.

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<sup>16</sup> "Gott und Götter sind die ersten Schöpfungen der menschlichen Dichtungskraft: in ihnen stellt sich der Mensch das Wesen der natürlichen Erscheinungen als von einer Ursache hergeleitet dar; als diese Ursache begreift er aber unwillkürlich nichts anderes als sein eigenes menschliches Wesen, in welchem diese gedichtete Ursache auch einzig nur begründet ist." Mary A. Cicora, *Mythology as Metaphor: Romantic Irony, Critical Theory, and Wagner's Ring* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 52.

<sup>17</sup> "Psyche als Leitfigur weiblicher Autorenschaft." Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 226.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>19</sup> See Holm, "Die schwebende Psyche als Leitfigur. Bettine von Arnims Goethe-Denkmäler" (in *Amor und Psyche*): "Die Sprechinstanz schöpft erst ihr Gegenüber, das allein als Spiegel fungiert, in dem sie das Ideal der 'eigenen höheren Natur' bewundern kann. Der Geliebte ist prinzipiell austauschbar, jedoch notwendig als Adresse der 'Ich-Ekstasen.'" Ibid., 228.

As we saw in the first chapter, *Abendglocken* was conceived as a *Denkmal* commemorating “the happiness of all time” (“aller Zeiten Glück”) before it became a *Denkmal* of abject melancholy:

What makes me so happy, oh, if I could tell you, [my] pure, lovely, and wonderful, through the most beautiful songs! Oh, if I could play it on soulful strings so that the tones’ wings would sound to your heart! Oh, could I paint it with glowing colors onto the purest blue sky at twilight, so that gleaming it may reflect from your eyes! Oh, could I carve it on granite in the deepest forest, an eternal monument of eternal happiness! What music has been to me, that is your being. Your being envelops her [i.e. music] so that I am unable to distinguish what is you and what is my art.<sup>20</sup>



**Example 77, Joachim, G-sharp-E-A**

We recall that Joachim himself made the allusion of the G-sharp-E-A motto (Ex. 77) to a monument. But let us return to the actual, real *Goethe-Denkmal* we saw in *Quartettabend bei Bettine*. The occasion for the *Denkmal* was Goethe’s seventieth birthday in 1819, which spurred Bettine to create a monument featuring Goethe and Psyche. And indeed, she not only sketched it on paper but also commissioned various sculptors to

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<sup>20</sup> “Was mich so glücklich macht, o könnt’ ich’s, Reine, Gute, Holde, Dir sagen in den schönsten Liedern! O könnt’ ich es spielen auf beseelten Saiten, dass es in der Töne Schwingen Dir klänge mit ans Herz! O könnt’ ich in der Abenddämmerung es glühend färben auf des Himmels reinstes Blau, dass es in Deinen Augen dürfte leuchtend wiederstrahlen! O könnt’ ich es meißeln im tiefsten Wald auf Ur-Granit, ein ewig Denkmal für aller Zeiten Glück! Was mir Musik gewesen, das ist mir Dein Sein. Dein Wesen schließt mit sie ein, dass ich nicht zu scheiden weiß, was Du, was meine Kunst.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 1.

help her realize the sketches. Already in 1824 she presented Goethe with a small model of her creation made according to her sketches.<sup>21</sup> A few decades later, the sculptor Karl Steinhäuser executed a “8.2 ft tall, 11 tn.sh heavy”<sup>22</sup> monument of white marble, according to Bettine’s small model, which was erected in Weimar in the Bellevue (or Belvedere) *Schlosspark* in 1853,<sup>23</sup> a historically significant place for Gisela and Joachim, commemorating where their relationship began. As will become evident, the figure of Psyche in this sculpture has encouraged scholars to uncover below its surface meaning about the artist herself, Bettine.

If Bettine von Arnim’s sculpture features Goethe and Psyche, Joachim’s music for Gisela’s play *Das Herz der Laïs* (1856), dedicated to her, also features Psyche, albeit somewhat *indirectly*: Gisela’s play contains – *mise en abyme*,<sup>24</sup> or, as a “play within a play”

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<sup>21</sup> Ursula Härtl, “Vorübergehend enthüllt: Das Bettinasche Goethedenkmal im Weimarer Landesmuseum,” in *Internationales Jahrbuch der Bettina-von-Arnim-Gesellschaft* 6-7 (1994/95), ed. Uwe Lemm and Walter Schmitz (Berlin: Saint Albin, 1994), 244.

<sup>22</sup> “2,5 m hohe, 200 Zentner schweres.” Ibid., 246.

<sup>23</sup> Wolfgang Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen. Bettine von Arnim geb. Brentano (1785-1859)* (Frankfurt am Main: Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurter Goethe Museum, 2009), 75; author cites Herman Grimm, *Goethe*, cited in Karl Werckmeister, ed. *Das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert in Bildnissen*, 5 vols. (Berlin: Kunstverlag der Photographischen Gesellschaft, 1899), II:323.

<sup>24</sup> For a definition of *mise en abyme* in relation to the myth of Cupid and Psyche, see Stephen Harrison, “Cupid and Psyche,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195170726.001.0001/acref->

– the myth of “Cupid and Psyche.” Bettine’s monument serves as a model for *one* view of Psyche, which possibly could have influenced Joachim’s and Gisela’s musical and literary works about Psyche.<sup>25</sup> Since in the course of the chapter we shall continuously refer to the myth, we provide here a summary in the version by Apuleius (125 - after 170 A.D.), readily available in German translation during the 1850s.

Apuleius tells the story of Psyche, an otherworldly beautiful girl and the youngest of three sisters, who, however, cannot find someone to marry. Venus, naturally envious of her beauty, which distracts more and more people from herself, sends her son to make Psyche magically fall in love with the ugliest creature possible. Cupid, with help of Apollo, devises a plan: she is brought to Cupid’s paradise-like realms, where he falls in love with her and visits her each night. Psyche, although having been prohibited to tell her sisters about Cupid, or to see his appearance, breaks her promise – lured by her sisters who imagined he was some kind of monster, as foretold by an oracle the father had consulted. Psyche believes them and decides to reveal his appearance one night with an oil lamp. But some oil from her lamp falls on him – Amor, the god of love – who

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9780195170726-e-328: “Within Apuleius’s novel this episode covers approximately one-fifth of the text and is literally and metaphorically central, providing a mirror of the novel’s main plot (*mise en abyme*), where the protagonist Lucius similarly gets into trouble for his curiosity and is rescued by a divine power (Isis).”

<sup>25</sup> The catalogue of the Bettine von Arnim exhibition 2009 (*Die Welt umwälzen*) shows among the books she possessed a German translation of Apuleius’s work, August Rode, *Der Goldne Esel, aus dem Lateinischen des Apulejus*. Zweiter Theil (Selbstverlag, 1783). See *Die Welt umwälzen*, 36 (item 49). As Dramaliewa shows (“Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen,” 160), Gisela may also have been inspired by Bettine’s literary treatments of Psyche, which we find, for example, in Bettine von Arnim’s *Ilius Pamphilus und die Ambrosia* (Leipzig: F. Volckmar, 1848), and of course in Bettine’s *Goethes Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde*. Another possible inspiration might have been Achim von Arnim’s novel “Raphael und seine Nachbarinnen,” in *Ausgewählte Novellen*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Hofmann & Comp., 1853), III:3-52.

leaves immediately. Psyche sets off to look for him, longing and desperate to be reunited, but Venus has heard of Psyche's betrayal and, angry and determined to destroy her rival, sends Psyche on an impossible mission to the underworld. But with the aid of magic, Psyche is able to reach her goal and is eventually reunited with Cupid, who, by giving her ambrosia, makes her immortal. She can then officially marry Cupid, and Venus eventually gives her blessings to the union of Cupid and Psyche, love and soul.

The unpublished letters of Gisela are an important source for investigating her collaboration with Joachim, but also for helping to contextualize larger questions, such as Joachim's change of aesthetic. As one scholar claims: "The most important source for the question of Joachim's aesthetic beliefs and his artistic self-understanding are, next to his compositions and correspondence with Schumann and Brahms, the letters to Gisela von Arnim."<sup>26</sup> While Joachim's perspective on his Jewish heritage has been the guiding principle in some scholars' approach to open questions in his biography, such as his compositional decline and coinciding change in aesthetics,<sup>27</sup> this chapter again looks to Gisela von Arnim and her literary circle for sources about his aesthetic approach. As a result the following discussion situates Joachim in the literary culture of his time, and resists the relative neglect of Joachim's intellectual life, in some recent scholarship that

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<sup>26</sup> "Wichtigste Quelle für die Frage nach Joachims ästhetischen Vorstellungen und seinem künstlerischen Selbstverständnis sind neben seinen Kompositionen und den Korrespondenzen mit Schumann und Brahms die Briefe an Gisela von Arnim." Borchard, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 26.

has set him in opposition to the “intellectual” artists Robert Schumann and Hans von Bülow.<sup>28</sup>

Because little is known about Gisela and because we have no recent scholarly monograph about her (Goedeke's encyclopedic almanac dedicated only a few pages to her drama in 1900,<sup>29</sup> followed by a PhD dissertation on her in 1925,<sup>30</sup> and more recently by a semi-scholarly work in 2004, partially deficient in its citations<sup>31</sup>) we may place her ideas – especially those related to *Das Herz der Lais* and its enveloped myth – into perspective by relating them to some of the most pertinent literary influences on her, including Goethe, her mother, and (later in the chapter) Jacob Grimm. The myth of Cupid and Psyche is just one example demonstrating that Gisela was searching for, and arguably found, her own literary voice.

Each section in this chapter will refer to a small number of documents – consisting of relevant letters from Gisela to Joachim (partly unpublished<sup>32</sup>) and Joachim's score to a little-known piano piece written for her play (to be discussed in

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>29</sup> See fn. 53.

<sup>30</sup> Dramaliewa, “Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen.”

<sup>31</sup> Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*.

<sup>32</sup> Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs-#10470; 10472a.

greater detail in Ch. 5). But its focus on the Psyche-Cupid myth is, as we shall argue, fundamental to understanding Joachim's relationship with Gisela, and, on the larger level, his conception of "psychological music."

#### **4.1 The Myth (mise en abyme) as Key to the (Auto-) Biographical Significance of Psyche**

Because Joachim's music is intricately connected to Gisela's drama – the letters between Gisela and Joachim show that Gisela's version of the "Cupid and Psyche" myth inspired the music – we shall examine in this chapter her drama. The melodrama of Cupid and Psyche within the play uses the idea of metamorphosis, an idea, in turn, that facilitates understanding Joachim's musical life in 1856. The source for Gisela's use of metamorphosis was, not surprisingly, Apuleius's famous collection of *Metamorphoses*.<sup>33</sup> In the center of that classical work, between the fourth and sixth book, we encounter the myth of Cupid and Psyche, just as it appears in the center of Arnim's play *Das Herz der Laïs*. In both works it stands as an autonomous insert, seemingly unrelated to the framing story – at first. However, the structure of *mise en abyme* in the *Metamorphoses* – and here we may consider not only Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, but also Ovid's more

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<sup>33</sup> Stephen Harrison, "Cupid and Psyche," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195170726.001.0001/acref-9780195170726-e-328>.

famous collection of the same title – allows us to read, as many scholars have done, myth as an [allegorical] “reflection of the outer plot on a smaller scale,”<sup>34</sup> created to throw light on the overarching whole.<sup>35</sup> Because the “outer plot” usually tells of various characters’ metamorphoses – in Apuleius’s work the framing story (i.e. the parts surrounding “Cupid and Psyche) concerns the main character, Lucius, who is transformed into a donkey – the “inner plot,” “Cupid and Psyche,” offers, in its mythological and concealed allegorical language, a key to unlocking the meaning of the “outer plot.”<sup>36</sup> And from a broader perspective, myth reveals the “narratological situation in which the poet tells us stories of metamorphoses,”<sup>37</sup> or, in other words, reveals “life itself.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> G. O. Hutchinson, *Talking Books. Readings in Hellenistic and Roman Books of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 215-216.

<sup>35</sup> Edwin John Kenney, *Apuleius: Cupid and Psyche* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 12; Kenney cites P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 190.

<sup>36</sup> Ben Edwin Perry, “An Interpretation of Apuleius’ Metamorphoses,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 57 (1926): 243.

<sup>37</sup> G. O. Hutchinson, *Talking Books. Readings in Hellenistic and Roman Books of Poetry*, 215.

<sup>38</sup> David Leeming, “Metamorphoses,” in *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195156690.001.0001/acref-9780195156690-e-1036>.



When we consider Joachim's life events in 1856, two instances of metamorphosis come to mind, the significance of which, as it happens, Gisela's drama and use of the myth can indeed help to explicate. First, there occurred a curious change of style, often noted but difficult to fully comprehend,<sup>39</sup> at some point between the three early overtures to *Heinrich* (1853-54), *Hamlet* (1853) and *Demetrius* (1853-54), and the decisive release of the well-known manifesto (1860), signed by Joachim and others, that launched officially the war of the romantics. At this point Joachim also publicly distanced himself from the Lisztian aesthetic he had ostensibly endorsed in the early 1850s, with its formal and harmonic novelties and its fusion of the symphonic and the literary to yield a "Dichtung in Tönen," a description that has been applied at least to the overtures to *Hamlet* and *Demetrius*.<sup>40</sup> But already before 1860 Joachim's changed attitude shines through his music. If we were to name a pivotal piece marking his change of aesthetic, we could well argue for the music for Gisela's melodrama, which shows how little his music engaged and interacted with the textual component according to the *melodramatic* traditions, as the next chapter will more closely examine. While Joachim did write melodrama music, he did not embrace the genre *musically*. Because melodrama involves

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<sup>39</sup> Borchard, 129-130.

<sup>40</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, "Dichtung und Symphonische Dichtung," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 34 (1982): 237.

an exchange between the spoken word and tones,<sup>41</sup> as a genre melodrama dwells close to the programmatic end of the programmatic vs. absolute dichotomy and therefore allows us to assess to what degree Joachim was responding in his music to the text. His melodrama music shows that his mind was wrapped around a very different aesthetic in the spring of 1856, the time of the Brahms-counterpoint exchange and other similar projects, and that indeed this music can be seen as one manifestation of his slight change in aesthetic outlook.

In this chapter we shall occupy ourselves with the other manifestation of metamorphosis. A notable change that occurred in 1856 connected to how Joachim viewed his music and his art of composing: a change in his relationship with Gisela was on the horizon, expressed, for example, in her signing of her letters as Gisela Grimm,<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Melodrama is defined as follows: "A composition or section of a composition, usually dramatic, in which one or more actors recite with musical commentary. If for one actor, the term 'monodrama' may be used; if two, 'duodrama' (as in the duodramas of Georg Benda). The form became popular in the second half of the 18th century. The first full-scale melodrama was *Pygmalion* by Rousseau, whose aim was 'to join the declamatory art with the art of music', alternating short spoken passages with instrumental music as a development of the *pantomime dialoguée*. On the whole, French melodramas tended to interpolate brief self-contained numbers between speeches, whereas the Germans preferred a sense of musical continuity, even when the music was interrupted by speech as well as accompanying it." John Warrack, "melodrama," in *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e4344> (accessed July 23, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> Unpublished letter from Gisela to Joachim, dated second half of April 1856, Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs-#10470

from which we can infer that her decision to marry not Joachim – with whom she was romantically involved on and off since 1852 – but Herman Grimm, to whom she had been “promised” more or less explicitly since her teens and whom she married in 1859, had begun to materialize.<sup>43</sup>

If, as we have established, Joachim’s “psychological music” took significant inspiration from Gisela von Arnim, this change in Joachim’s life – which he debated and discussed with her and which they commemorated, before breaking up in 1857, with an unexpected ritual – cannot be ignored.

#### **4.1.1 A Letter from Gisela to Joachim Titled “Pantomime” and the Fragmented Myth**

A review of *Das Herz der Laïs* (1857), which appeared in *Das Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser*<sup>44</sup> in September 1858 and also discussed Gisela’s other dramas, all published together as her *Dramatische Werke* in three volumes, raised two legitimate concerns. First, the reviewer noted, there was apparently no music for Arnim’s melodrama:

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<sup>43</sup> Gisela’s engagement to Herman Grimm took place shortly before Bettine’s death in early 1859; see *Internationales Jahrbuch der Bettina-von-Arnim-Gesellschaft*, vol. 13-15 (Berlin: Saint Albin: 2003), 99; they were married on October 24, 1859, see Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*, 151.

<sup>44</sup> L. Seeger, review of *Dramatische Werke*, by Gisela von Arnim (Bonn, 1858). *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* 39 (September 26, 1858): 931-33.

So far we haven't noticed that a composer has written the music necessary for a performance of this work. Now, perhaps this dramatic/musical/pantomime folly will nevertheless be realized when the music for it is available.<sup>45</sup>

And second, he complained that the myth of "Cupid and Psyche" was divided into bits and pieces, which, in order to understand the myth, he had to collect and reconstruct from various places: "[from] the instructions of the poetess for the pantomime, and in part from the words of the watching emperor, as well as of his house master and Laïs himself, who interjects a few words."<sup>46</sup> In other words, the story of the myth is split two-fold – first, into stage instructions, i.e. inaudible text in small print and brackets to be read (and memorized), and carried out silently (pantomimically), and second, into text to be spoken by the characters. The silent stage instructions intended for the pantomime, besides disrupting the myth, were so complex that the reviewer questioned their suitability for pantomime: "The special instructions for the actress are

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<sup>45</sup> "Wir haben bis jetzt nichts davon vernommen, dass [...] ein Componist die [zur Aufführung dieses Werks] nothwendige Musik gedichtet hätte. Nun, vielleicht wird das dramatisch-musikalisch-pantomimische Wagstück doch [...] gemacht, wenn nur einmal die Musik dazu vorhanden ist." L. Seeger, review of *Dramatische Werke*, by Gisela von Arnim (Bonn, 1858). *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* 39 (September 26, 1858): 931.

<sup>46</sup> "Den Anweisungen der Dichterin für die [pantomimische] Darstellerin, [und] theils aus den Worten des zuschauenden Kaisers, [sowie] seines Hausmeisters und der Laïs selbst, die ein paar mal für sich zwischenein spricht." Ibid., 932.

an enormous, perhaps impossible task; who wants to dance to that?"<sup>47</sup> The remaining text of the myth was distributed – and hence broken up as well – among the main characters of the play. In short, for the reviewer Gisela von Arnim had not effectively presented the myth in its entirety, at least in the published version.<sup>48</sup> As we will see, the critic was right: in fact, he did not get the whole picture.

First of all, a letter with the whole story of "Cupid and Psyche," not manipulated and not disrupted, exists on a single sheet of paper in Gisela's handwriting,<sup>49</sup> sent this story to Joachim in a letter titled "Pantomime." It is almost identical to the "Cupid and Psyche" puzzle in Gisela's published version of the play, except that it is in one piece. This letter is a crucial document, a "libretto" intended for Joachim, yet unpublished, which, to my knowledge, has never been mentioned in the literature on Joseph Joachim or Gisela von Arnim.

Second, the critic did not get the whole picture in that there *was* music written for Gisela's play. Joachim's piece, finished on July 1, 1856, and titled *Versuch eines Tanzes*,

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<sup>47</sup> "[Die] speziellen Anmerkung[en] für die Schauspielerin [...] [sind eine] gewaltige, eine vielleicht unmögliche Aufgabe [...] wer will darauf tanzen?" Ibid., 932.

<sup>48</sup> The reviewer also noted that the play evinces clear signs pointing to an intended performance.

<sup>49</sup> Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs-#10472a.

was meant to be expanded but, if we judge from its length of nine minutes, apparently was not.

And third, neither the reviewer nor other readers of Gisela's drama knew that behind the scenes of *Das Herz der Laiis* and its "myth-within-the play" of "Cupid and Psyche," we find significant documentation regarding the last stage of the lovers' relationship, and in the music written for it some answers about why Gisela did not publish the music together with her text, as a melodrama or "dramatic-musical-pantomimic" work, as would have been customary. If the reviewer failed to apprehend the myth, owing to its fragmented presentation in the play, it nevertheless played out in the personal lives of Gisela and Joachim, where it served as a "key" to unlock deeper layers of "the outside plot."

## **4.2 Chronology of Events**

Gisela's greatest literary achievement before the drama in question of 1856 did not occur in that genre but in various fairy tales. Her attraction to fairy tales bespeaks the family's literary proximity to tales and myths such as those of the Grimm brothers (whose family she entered when she married Herman Grimm), which lie at the heart of

the literary movement called "Heidelberg Romanticism."<sup>50</sup> Gisela's early works were partly co-written with her mother, Bettine.<sup>51</sup> Her dramas were published unusually quickly – she finished *Das Herz des Laïs* in January 1856 and published it in 1857,<sup>52</sup> intended mostly for friends and relatives.<sup>53</sup>

According to Luba Dramaliewa, Arnim conceived of the idea of a melodrama after she had seen, with Joachim, Gluck's *Orpheus*. Its treatment of the underworld particularly resonated in her.<sup>54</sup> From Joachim's and Gisela's correspondence we can not

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<sup>50</sup> For "Heidelberger Romantik" and its two main representatives, Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, see Armin Schlechter, *Die Romantik in Heidelberg: Brentano, Arnim und Görres am Neckar* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2007).

<sup>51</sup> Bettine von Arnim and Gisela von Arnim, *Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeiuns*, ed. O. Mallon (Berlin: Fraenkel, 1926).

<sup>52</sup> Joachim's portion of the collaboration was not revised or revisited after publication of Arnim's work in 1857; it was brought to light only in 1983 in its guise of July 1856: Joseph Joachim, "Versuch eines Tanzes," in *Johannes Brahms und seine Freunde*, ed. Joachim Draheim (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1983).

<sup>53</sup> Goetze, ed., "Gisela von Arnim," in *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen von Karl Goedeke*, VII:87: "In her dramas she turned much more in her thoughts to a defined circle of relatives or friends who would understand her." ("Sie wandte sich [mit ihren Dramen] vielmehr in Gedanken immer an einen bestimmten Kreis durch Verwandschaft oder Freundschaft ihr zugehöriger Personen, die sie verstehen würden.")

<sup>54</sup> Luba, "Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen," 54: "The letters that she now (1854, after the summer) sent to her friend in Hanover contained mainly judgments about music. So the performance of Gluck's *Orpheus* gave her the opportunity to speak about his music. The monotony of the melodies did not escape her. The ballet of spirits in the underworld stimulated her to write her later one-act drama *Das Herz der Laïs*." ("Die Briefe, die sie jetzt [1854, nach Sommer] dem Freunde nach Hannover sendet, enthalten meist Urteile über Musik. So gibt sich

only gather a rough chronology of events related to the composition of Gisela's play and Joachim's melodrama music but also discern between Joachim's lines hints about the mythological figure of Psyche, similar in nature to the cues for "role designs and production patterns" ("Rollenentwürfe und Inszenierungsmuster")<sup>55</sup> that we can intuit from Bettine von Arnim's statue of Goethe and Psyche. Furthermore, the tone of Joachim's letters betrays unmistakable signs of low compositional self-esteem, in keeping with the chronology of events.

Gisela asked Joachim in early 1856, presumably just after she finished writing *Das Herz der Laïs* (1856), to compose music for a "pantomime" that was part of her drama. After seeing the Italian actress Adelaide Ristori ("La Ristori") as "Myrrha" in Alfieri's tragedy *Myrrha* in Berlin on November 12, 1855, Gisela devised the plan for her drama, which was completed within two months and dedicated to La Ristori, who, although forgotten today, had, almost single-handedly, "effectively put Italian theatre on the international map" in the 1850s.<sup>56</sup>

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ihr die Aufführung von Glucks 'Orpheus' die Gelegenheit, über seine Musik zu sprechen. Die Monotonie der Melodien entgeht ihr nicht. Das Ballett der Geister in der Unterwelt gab ihr [...] die Anregung zu ihrem späteren einaktigen Drama *Das Herz der Laïs*." )

<sup>55</sup> Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 40.



The correspondence between Joachim and Gisela about their collaboration assumed the following stages. First, on, January 3, 1856 Joachim requested, "Send me your ballet for Ristori."<sup>57</sup> On January 18 he added in another letter to her, "Your Laïs is beautiful - I have already thought up much music for it," from which we gain that he had received and quickly read her play.<sup>58</sup> Evidently he shared Gisela's interest and passion for La Ristori – he once spoke about her as the ideal "psychic" actress ("'psychische' Darstellerin")<sup>59</sup> in whose acting "the smallest movement is significant."<sup>60</sup> On February 5, 1856, Joachim divulged that he had begun to compose music for the

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<sup>56</sup> Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*, 84. For a detailed discussion of Adelaide Ristori, see Susan Bassnett, *Three Tragic Actresses: Siddons, Rachel, Ristori*, ed. Michael Richard Booth, John Strokes, and Susan Bassnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 119.

<sup>57</sup> "Schick mir dein Ballet für die Ristori." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 77, letter of January 3, 1856.

<sup>58</sup> "Deine Laïs ist wunderschön – habe schon viel Musik dazu gedacht." Ibid., 79, letter of January 18, 1856.

<sup>59</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:305, letter to Gisela of February 1856.

<sup>60</sup> "But yesterday I saw Seebach in the theater. She has extraordinary gifts, but nevertheless it seems to me as if she places too much weight on momentary effects and does not divide her warmth evenly through the entire character. As the ideal I always have to think of Ristori, in whose acting the smallest movement is significant." ("Doch sah ich gestern die Seebach auf dem Theater [...]. Es ist doch [...] außerordentliche Begabung bei ihr – aber dennoch [...], [mir] scheint, als legte sie auf die Effektmomente zu viel Gewicht und vertheilte die Wärme nicht gleichmäßig genug auf den ganzen Charakter. Ich muß da immer als Ideal an die Ristori denken, bei der die kleinste Bewegung bedeutungsvoll ist [...].") Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:449, letter of October 3, 1856.

pantomime, which suggests (as does an unpublished letter from Gisela to Joachim, to which we turn below) that his music was intended to line up not with Gisela's entire play but just with the "pantomime" within the play.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, Joachim's use of the term "pantomime" (he had previously used the term "ballet") implies that by February 5, 1856, he had received a highly significant but undated letter from Gisela explaining in eight pages how she imagined his music being coordinated with her drama. In addition, she sent one separate sheet titled "pantomime," which features the myth of Cupid and Psyche in one piece – something the reviewer of her play totally missed in the published version. The same letter offered significant advice about how Joachim might write his melodrama music (Gisela likely perceived his insecurity in this genre), including suggested references he could consult for advice. Despite Gisela's detailed instructions, Joachim did not complete the piece until July 1, and even when he sent it to her, he asked for clarification about her intentions regarding the synchronization of music and text. She had already answered many of his questions several months earlier, which strongly suggests that the spring of 1856 was overshadowed by some misunderstandings of a musical and/or personal nature.

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<sup>61</sup> "Ich habe angefangen Deine Pantomime zu komponieren." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 81, letter of February 5, 1856.

Scattered through the correspondence are expressions of Joachim's doubt about his own music. While rather hopeful in January 1856 – he wrote, “Of course, I believe I can compose it”<sup>62</sup> – two months later he speaks of his “Ballett” as “dreadfully sober.”<sup>63</sup> And even Gisela felt obliged to send encouragement – in one letter, probably written in February or March 1856,<sup>64</sup> she wrote, “Like me, mother and Armgart [Gisela's sister] believe you could do it if you only imagined the movements.”<sup>65</sup> Even when the piece was finished, Joachim did not send it without reiterating his self-doubt: “Dear Gisel, yesterday [July 1, 1856] I tried to write out some ballet-like music; but I don't believe that it was in the least suitable for your purpose.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> “Ich glaube nämlich, dass ich es componieren kann.” Ibid., 79, letter of January 18, 1856.

<sup>63</sup> “For today I don't want to plague you – you philosophizing Greek in the best sense of the word. By fall, I hope to deserve Psyche with her tender pineapple fragrance. The ballet that I began this winter is dreadfully sober.” (“Für heut will ich dich [...] philosophierende Griechin im besten Wortsinn [...] nicht plagen. Die Psyche mit dem zarten Ananas-Odem hoffe ich mir bis zum Herbst noch zu verdienen. Das Ballett das ich diesen Winter angefangen, ist entsetzlich nüchtern.”) Ibid., 87, letter of March 13, 1856.

<sup>64</sup> See fn. 88 for dating of this letter (10472a).

<sup>65</sup> “Mutter [Bettine] und Armgart [Gisela's sister], wie ich meinen auch du würdest das können [composing the melodrama music], wenn du dir nur die Bewegungen vorstellst [...]” Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs - #10472a, letter from Gisela to Joachim of “ca. 1857” [wrong date, see fn. 88].

<sup>66</sup> “Liebe Gisel, gestern [July 1, 1856] versucht' ich etwas balletähnliche Musik aufzuschreiben; ich glaube aber nicht, daß sie im Geringsten tauglich zu Deinem Zweck.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 111, letter of July 2, 1856.

But besides expressing self-doubt, Joachim's letter also plays on the mythological figure Psyche, suggesting that he was trying to compose the music so that he might deserve a reward: "I am hoping to deserve, by autumn, the Psyche with the delicate pineapple-breath," he writes.<sup>67</sup> Was Gisela the "Psyche mit dem Ananas-Odem" that Joachim was trying to lure, or to "deserve," by writing good music? All the same, he sent his *Versuch eines Tanzes* to her at the beginning of July, together with instructions for her to go through the "Versuch" with red pen and indicate which portions of the music she found usable – having forgotten, it seems, that she had clarified many of these questions in a letter she had sent earlier in the spring.<sup>68</sup> He also asked her for a plan of her "dance, how long, how many tempos, and perhaps the meters" – raising additional questions and ignoring previous answers – and promised to write more music than the small piece he had already composed. Ending the letter in self-doubt, he said he would try to compose more music *if* she still believed he was the right composer for the task.<sup>69</sup> Having sent off the *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Joachim did not receive an answer about the duration, tempos, and meters or anything else pertaining to the piece (perhaps because

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<sup>67</sup> "Die Psyche mit dem zarten Ananas-Odem hoffe ich mir bis zum Herbst noch zu verdienen." Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:326, letter from the middle of March, 1856.

<sup>68</sup> See fn. 88 about dating of the pantomime letter.

<sup>69</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 111, letter of July 2, 1856.

Gisela did not want to reiterate what she had already said). Her next letter from a week later apparently did not discuss the music further, prompting this response:

I thank you from the heart for all the lovely things that you sent. Apologies if my letter is somewhat dry; you are no less in my heart than before, but I had imagined all kinds of strange things since you hadn't written for so long, and do not have my old tone, when I speak to you. Next time I'll have overcome it.

Your JJ

P.S. My ballet music is certainly calculated for lame limbs and colds; I no longer know a single motive from it. Make me really miserable.<sup>70</sup>

The same letter, despite being “dry,” as Joachim adds apologetically, and despite inviting her feedback, even negative feedback (“mache mich nur schlecht”), seems to play again on the mythological figure of Psyche and the pineapple fruit, although here the pineapple alone, without Psyche, is invoked. Joachim thanks Gisela for having sent him not only a nice picture but also a piece of pineapple, not without mentioning that everything she sends him is “suggestive”: “The little picture is like everything beautiful suggestive for me, and so I want to chew pineapple and ginger in succession, after I believe that you have confided in me the good or vanity. Unfortunately the glass above

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<sup>70</sup> “Von Herzen danke ich für alles Schöne das mir durch Deine Sendung zuteil ward [little picture]. [...] Verzeihe wenn mein Brief etwas trocken ist; ich habe Dich nicht weniger im Herzen als je, aber ich hatte mir weil Du so lange nicht geschrieben hattest allerlei Sonderbares eingebildet und bin nicht im alten Ton, wenn ich zu Dir spreche. Das nächste Mal wird's überwunden sein [...]. Dein J.J. [ps] Meine Balletmusik ist gewiß für lahme Glieder und Schnupfen berechnet – ich weiß kein einzig Motiv mehr davon. Mache mich nur recht schlecht.” Ibid., 112-113: letter of July 9, 1856.

it was broken, despite the soft, sweet fruit protection.”<sup>71</sup> What “Bildchen” is Joachim alluding to? Could it be a representation of Psyche? (Tellingly, albeit unrelated, in 1808 Goethe had received from the twenty-three year-old Bettine a package in which she had also sent him fruit.<sup>72</sup>) A few months later, Joachim returned the gesture, and sent *her* pineapple: “The pineapples, which should be good, are for you.”<sup>73</sup> That the playful game about Psyche and the pineapple was not merely a private pastime between Gisela and Joachim is evident in a German collection of poetry from 1812, where we read: “‘Ah!’ sighed Psyche, ‘God of gods/ all power is in your hand/ sunshine, wind and weather,/ pineapple, the fragrance of grapes!’”<sup>74</sup>

Joachim’s personification of Gisela as Psyche penetrated even into his music. The following letter of 1854 reveals Psyche’s significance and at the same time alludes to

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<sup>71</sup> “Das Bildchen ist eben wie alles Schöne für mich beziehungsreich, und so will ich den abwechselnd Ananas und Ingwer kauen, je nachdem ich glaube daß Du mir Gutes zutraust oder Eitelkeit. Leider war das Glas darüber gebrochen trotz des weichsüßen Fruchtschutzes.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 111-112, letter of July 9, 1856.

<sup>72</sup> *Goethes Briefe, Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. Karl Robert Mandelkow, 4 vols. (*Briefe 1805-1821*) (Hamburg: Christian Wegner, 1965), III:80, letter (No. 878) to Bettine von Arnim of June 22, 1808.

<sup>73</sup> “Die Annanas, die gut sein sollen, sind für dich.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 143, letter of December 17, 1856.

<sup>74</sup> “Ach!” seufzte Psyche, “Gott der Götter / In deiner Hand ist alle Kraft / Ist Sonnenschein, / Ist Wind und Wetter, / Ist Ananas, ist Rebensaft!” Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim, *Sämmtliche Werke: Erste Originalausgabe aus des Dichters Handschriften*, 7 vols., ed. Wilhelm Körte (Halberstadt: Büro für Literatur und Kunst, 1812), VI:204.

sculpture, probably Bettine von Arnim's design for the *Goethe-Denkmal* mentioned briefly at the beginning of the chapter: "Dear friend! Since my return a new musical world has opened up for me – I feel everything twice as clear – and thinking of you in tones I have often fantasized at the piano – since I do not have a Psyche that I can make in plaster."<sup>75</sup> Did Joachim know, perhaps, of the small plaster statue of Psyche that Bettine von Arnim had made for Goethe?

Perhaps Gisela had told him about her mother's statues of Goethe and Psyche. Perhaps on that occasion she also mentioned that even Sophie von la Roche, her great grandmother, commemorating her short-lived infatuation with Christoph Martin Wieland in 1750, had later received<sup>76</sup> from him the poem "An Psyche" (1767).<sup>77</sup> One of Joachim's letters of this period, in fact, we could without hesitation also title "An Psyche": a letter of February 7, 1856, he signs with the words "Adieu liebe Psyche, Du alles. J. J."<sup>78</sup> Joachim's words "Du alles" recall Beethoven's letter to his "Unsterbliche

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<sup>75</sup> "Liebe Freundin! [...] Mir ist seit meiner Rückkehr eine neue Musikwelt aufgegangen – ich empfinde alles doppelt klar – und da habe ich mich am Klavier oft recht ausfantasiert, Dein im Tönen gedenkend – da ich keine Psyche habe die ich in Gyps anräuchern [in Gyps anfertigen] könnte." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 40, letter of May 23, 1854.

<sup>76</sup> Max Koch, "Wieland, Christoph Martin," in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 42 (1897): 400.

<sup>77</sup> Kuno Riddendorf, *Sophie de la Roche und Wieland. Zum hundertjährigen Todestage der Dichterin* (Hamburg, Lütcke & Wulff, 1907), 26-27; also Christoph Martin Wieland, *Briefe an Sophie von La Roche*, ed. Franz Horn (Berlin, 1820), 344.

Geliebte," which begins with the words "Mein Engel, mein alles," and was first published in 1840<sup>79</sup>; it is unclear whether Joachim knew of it.

During the spring and summer of 1856, as Joachim struggled with the melodrama music, he also worked on other compositional projects. On February 9, 1856, he witnessed the premiere, in an *Abonnementkonzert* in Hanover,<sup>80</sup> of one of his symphonic arrangements of Schubert's *Grand Duo* D. 812; Joachim was then also working on an "Elegische Ouvertüre dem Andenken von Kleist gewidmet" (first performed in 1857).<sup>81</sup> Most important, however, that year marked the beginning of a learned musical discourse: in February 1856, Brahms proposed to Joachim the idea of a counterpoint exchange.<sup>82</sup> Although Joachim did not send his first counterpoint exercise until April, the pace of the exchange intensified as the two friends dispatched fugue

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<sup>78</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 82, letter of February 7, 1856.

<sup>79</sup> Joseph Kerman, et al, "Beethoven, Ludwig van," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40026pg7> (accessed July 27, 2013).

<sup>80</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim, Ein Lebensbild*, II:82-83.

<sup>81</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 82, letter of February 7, 1856; Joachim's *Kleist Overture* was first performed in 1857; see Borchard, supplemental repertoire list.

<sup>82</sup> Brodbeck, "The Brahms-Joachim Counterpoint Exchange: or, Robert, Clara, and 'the Best Harmony between Jos. and Joh.,'" 34.



subjects, canons, and variations over the next three months.<sup>83</sup> But when it came to writing in the “difficult” forms (“schwierigen Formen”), Joachim’s enthusiasm for this project was not unlimited, and he again expressed self-doubt:

My younger friend Brahms is already such a master in handling this genre of composition, while I never occupied myself with it beyond the first grammatical hurdles. So one is forced to concentrate one’s power of invention on a single point – which for me is of course really good – for in everything that I have so far created, I gave myself to my feelings. I felt that that was not the right way.<sup>84</sup>

A thus insecure, doubt-ridden Joachim wrote to Gisela, “Die Psyche mit dem zarten Ananas-odem hoffe ich mir bis zum Herbst noch zu verdienen.”<sup>85</sup> To discover the meaning of the cryptic Psyche allusions and what it was that Joachim was hoping to deserve, we may turn to two connected letters in the correspondence from the spring of 1856, of which Gisela’s (unpublished) letter is undated. Here she seems to allude to the seal Joachim had been using to close his letters since 1854 (which he also used when he composed and needed to glue additional music paper onto crossed out notes): a seal

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 30-88, 35-36, 45.

<sup>84</sup> “Mein jüngerer Freund [Brahms] ist in der Handhabung dieser Compositions-Gattung schon solcher Meister, während ich mich nie über das erste grammatikalische Müßen damit beschäftigt hatte. [...] So zwingt es doch, die Erfindungskraft auf einen bestimmten Punkt zu concentriren, [...] – was mir namentlich recht gut ist –, denn bei allem, was ich bis jetzt schuf, gab ich mich [...] der Empfindung [...] hin, [...] Ich fühle, daß das nicht der richtige Weg [...]” Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:340, letter of April 26, 1856.

<sup>85</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 87, letter of March 13, 1856.

featuring a harp (or lyre) and, on top of it, the three letters f.a.e, as represented in Illustration 3.<sup>86</sup>



**Illustration 3, Joachim's Letter Seal, "F-A-E", #BRA:Be4:52, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek "Carl von Ossietzky," Hamburg**

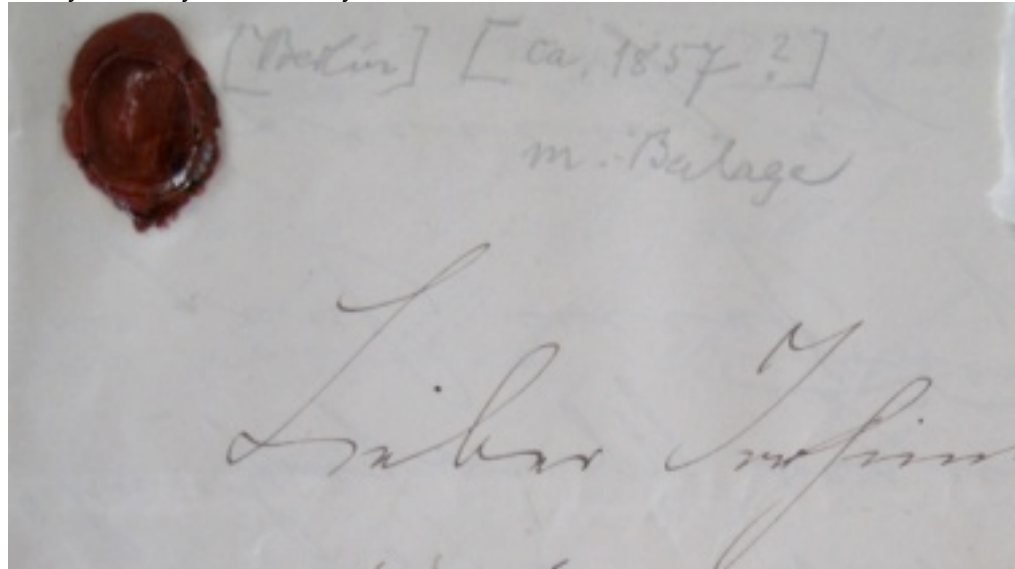
During the blissful summer of 1854 Joachim had told her that the three letters, which had expressed his sentiments after the broken-off engagement in 1852, had changed their meaning. "Dein f.a.e." meant "no longer 'free but alone', but yours for all eternity."<sup>87</sup> Gisela seems to refer to the new meaning of f.a.e. in the following manuscript letter (x represents undecipherable words):

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<sup>86</sup> Manuscript letter, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky, BRA:Be4:52, letter dated "Juni-August 1854," where the seal with the letters f.a.e. is clearly visible.

<sup>87</sup> "Nicht mehr: 'frei aber einsam,' sondern Dein für alle Ewigkeit." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 51, letter of June-August 1854.

P.S. This letter will be sealed with an ancient little head of Psyche meant to reward you for Psyche [i.e., writing the music for the pantomime]; your symbol appeared to me to be too large to be used forever, and I am sending you the little head until I find something totally fitting for you. Even if it is not as spiritual [geistig] small and clear as I imagine Psyche, whom I contrast to the earthly beauty of Venus, yet it is still fresh, pure, bold, and spiritually relevant for xxx. The myth of Psyche is surely one of the most divine love stories on earth.<sup>88</sup>



**Illustration 4, Gisela's Letter Seal with the Head of Psyche ("Psycheköpfchen")**

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<sup>88</sup> "N.S. Dieser Brief wird mit einem antiken Psychenköpfchen gesiegelt welches dir zum Lohn bestimmt ist für die Psyche, dein Symbol kam mir zu groß für immer vor [f.a.e. seal] und ich schenke dir dies Köpfche[n] [i.e. the seal] x bis ich etwas finde was ganz für dich passt, - Wenn es auch nicht so geistig schmal und hell ist wie ich mir, als Gegensatz zur irdischen Schönheit der Venus, Psychen denke, so ist es doch Frisch rein kühn und für xxx vergeistigt. Die Sage der Psyche ist sicher eine der Göttlichsten Liebesgeschichten die es auf Erden gibt." Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Hs-#10472a, dated "ca. 1857" but probably sent before March 13, 1856. Joachim's letter of March 13, 1856 (*Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 82) precedes her letter, as one can deduce from the description of the Psyche seal as a "reward": Joachim hopes to "deserve" the reward by autumn 1856, which means that this letter, offering the reward, was probably written before March 13, 1856.

This letter, sealed with a delicate head of Psyche (Illustration 4) answers many questions but poses others in return. First, it seems that what Joachim wanted to “deserve” by the fall of 1856, after finishing the music “for Psyche,” was a little reward from Gisela in the form of a seal representing Psyche [“Psychenköpfchen”]. But the reason why she promised to send him this seal was because his own seal, f.a.e., seemed to be “too large to be used forever,” in a presumably allegorical sense. And as an explanation of why Psyche for Gisela fit better than f.a.e., she told him that Psyche, as opposed to the fleshly Venus, was spiritual, or sublime, that the love story of Cupid and Psyche was “göttlich.”

What was Joachim’s reaction to her gesture, which countered, albeit implicitly, his sentiments and dedication to her “für alle Ewigkeit,” and how did he view the reward – a spiritual reward offering an alternative way of thinking about his relationship to her – an alternative endorsing the spiritual rather than the fleshly, and opposing the eternal part of Joachim’s promise of love “für alle Ewigkeit”? His reaction does not survive, at least not in words. But possibly, his music for Psyche already contained his response. Written with great difficulty – as we shall also see in our analysis of Ch. 5 – it represented a creative project, somewhat against the grain. Let us investigate the first appearance of “Psyche” in his letters and how he viewed the

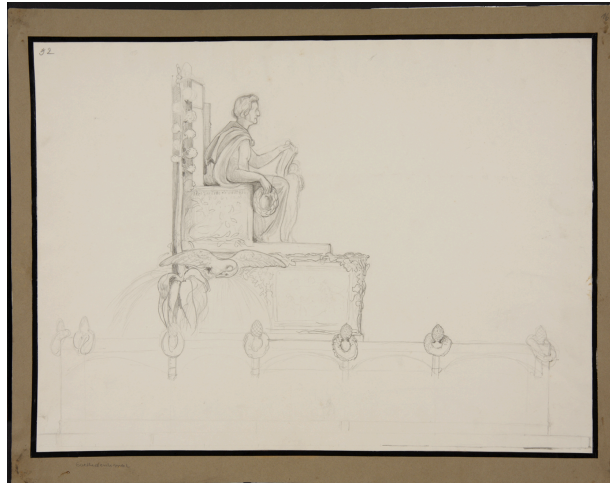
mythological figure. If Gisela was Joachim's "Psyche," who was "Psyche" according to Joachim? And if Gisela was "his" Psyche, who was he, Joachim?

### **4.3 Bettine von Arnim, Goethe, and Joachim's First Encounter with Psyche**

Because the first mention of Psyche in Joachim's letters refers, most likely, to Bettine von Arnim's Goethe monument, we now return briefly to her sculpture and Joachim's letter referring to a "plaster statue" of Psyche, which has found its way into various Goethe biographies, where it is described as "a small plaster model, which depicts the seated Goethe, grouped with a Psyche, in the right hand a laurel wreath, and in the left, holding a lyre."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> "Ein kleines Modell in Gyps, welches Goethe'n sitzend, mit einer Psyche gruppiert, in der rechten Hand einen Lorbeerkrantz, und in der linken eine Leyer haltend, darstellt." Alfred Nicolovius, "Skizzen zu Statue, Goethe'n darstellend," in *Über Goethe: literarische und artistische Nachrichten* (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Leich, 1828), I:432.



**Illustration 5, Side View of Bettine's *Goethe-Denkmal*, sketched by Bettine von Arnim (Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt, photography by David Hall)**

In 1854, in a letter to Gisela four years before she wrote her drama and he composed the music for the pantomime, Joachim commented on the plaster model of *Psyche*, as we have seen above (see fn. 75).<sup>90</sup> By literally invoking a *Denkmal* – “Dein geDenkend” – and alluding to a sculpture of *Psyche* made of musical tones instead of plaster, Joachim perhaps betrayed that he was familiar with the small plaster statue of *Psyche* that Bettine von Arnim had sketched in the course of the national Goethe *Denkmal* project in which various famous sculptors competed.<sup>91</sup> The chronology of Joachim's letter strongly suggests that he knew not only of Bettine's motive – Goethe

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<sup>90</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 40, letter of May 23, 1854.

<sup>91</sup> Sketches were made by Johann Heinrich von Dannecker, Berthel Thorvaldsen, and Christian Daniel Rauch; the latter's sketch was favored by the committee of the Frankfurt Goethe *Denkmal*. See Bäumer, “*Bettine, Psyche, Mignon*” *Bettina von Arnim und Goethe*, 105.

and Psyche, of which sketches and small plaster models (“blueprints”) existed – but possibly even the large monument by Karl Steinhäuser (1853) we mentioned earlier, featuring Goethe with the nude Psyche holding a lyre, according to Bettine’s design (see Illustration 6).



**Illustration 6, Side View of the *Goethe-Denkmal* by Karl Steinhäuser, realized according to Bettine’s Sketch**

Of course, Joachim could also have seen a version of the Goethe monument at Bettine’s musical evenings, as *Quartettabend bei Bettine* suggests. The water color introduced at the beginning of this chapter captures the atmosphere of these events, and shows Joachim and his string quartet just below the *Denkmal* of Goethe and Psyche.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> See Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 64, 73, which features the aquarelle titled “Quartettabend bei Bettine von Arnim,” by Carl Johann Arnold (see Illustration 2, above). The white rectangular monument in the middle of the aquarelle seems to depict one version of the monument, of which Bettine had made a sketch in pencil, which is preserved (see Illustration 5). The ornamentation of the monument as depicted on this pencil sketch (“Seitenansicht des Goethe-Denkmal”), as well as the shape and the contours, which exactly resemble those of the aquarelle, reveal that the monument on the aquarelle must have been a model according to this pencil sketch.

Illustration 6 shows the sculpture from the side, and, according to Herman Grimm's Goethe book of 1899, the picture represents the statue at a time when it was "still located in the [...] 'Tempelherrenhaus' in the park, where it was exhibited more freely and visibly than at its current location."<sup>93</sup> The "Tempelherrenhaus" to which Herman Grimm alludes is located in Weimar in the Bellevue *Schlosspark*; here Steinhäuser's statue (designed by Bettine) had resided from December 1853.<sup>94</sup> It was purchased by Karl Alexander von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach in the spring of 1852.<sup>95</sup> Despite some financial difficulties – Bettine's letter to Liszt of August 9, 1853, suggests raising funds through subscriptions if no German count were willing to finance the statue<sup>96</sup> – it was finally installed in the "Tempelherrenhaus" in December of the same year.<sup>97</sup> For the inauguration of this *Denkmal* Gisela and Bettine had spent several weeks

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<sup>93</sup> *Die Welt umwälzen*, 75, author cites Herman Grimm, *Goethe*, as cited in Karl Werckmeister, ed. *Das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert in Bildnissen*, II:323.

<sup>94</sup> Bettina von Arnim, *Bettine von Arnims Briefwechsel mit ihren Söhnen*, 2 vols., Wolfgang Bunzel, Ulrike Landfester, eds. (Göttingen, Wallstein, 1999), II:449.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 449.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 449.

<sup>97</sup> "Your letters from Weimar are so warm in memories, dear, dear, Gisela! Do you still know how we came out of the forest to Belvedere, when you said to me there that I must remain good to you, even when we traveled apart – how every memory of my earlier life had disappeared within me, how the moment of eternal bliss expressed the dusk of my own flaming breast. Whether we will meet there again?" ("Deine Briefe aus Weimar sind so erinnerungswarm; liebe, liebe Gisela!



in Weimar in the preceding fall,<sup>98</sup> during which time Joachim and Gisela corresponded. Joachim's responses share his glowing memories about the *Schlosspark* of Belvedere, where, in fact, he had first met Gisela on a walk through the park with Bettine, Herman, and maybe even Liszt and Bülow.<sup>99</sup> At this significant point in time, according to a recent fitting (albeit coincidental) formulation, the "Hungarian Cupido"<sup>100</sup> [i.e. Joachim] "knew to make sure that he was alone with Gisela,"<sup>101</sup> where they then exchanged their thoughts and inaugurated their meaningful relationship. In any case, we can safely assume that Joachim knew of the Steinhäuser *Denkmal* in Weimar through Gisela, Liszt, or Bettine herself.

But Steinhäuser's *Goethe-Denkmal* was not the only one made after Bettine's sketches. When the plan of erecting a *Goethe-Denkmal* in Frankfurt was first devised, a

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Weißt Du noch, wie wir im Belvedere aus dem Wald kamen [...] als Du mir da sagtest ich müßte Dir immer gut bleiben, auch wenn wir auseinander reisten – wie war alles Erinnern in mir verschwunden von meinem frühern Leben, wie war der Moment ewige Glückseligkeit das Abendroth meiner eigenen flammenden Brust Ausdruck. Ob wir je wieder dort zusammentreffen?" Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 8-9, letter of December 3-4, 1853.

<sup>98</sup> Bettina von Arnim, *Bettine von Arnims Briefwechsel mit ihren Söhnen*, 449.

<sup>99</sup> Fritz Böttger, *Bettina von Arnim* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1990), 348.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

committee was entrusted to choose among the submitted designs. Despite Bettine's design, the commission was given to sculptor Christian Daniel Rauch, one of the leading sculptors whom Fontane found in "Unsere lyrische und epische Poesie seit 1848" to possess a truly realistic and current style: "What we require above all is a Master Rauch among the poets."<sup>102</sup> Bettine, however, did not approve of his realization of her sketch because it depicted, according to her, an "old rogue in a nightgown."<sup>103</sup> Inspired to surpass Rauch's effort, she created, under the supervision of sculptor Ludwig Wichmann in the spring of 1824, various small plaster models, which, Rauch notwithstanding, represented a highly individual and imaginary vision with Goethe on a large, ornamented base and a small figure of Psyche, provocatively positioned, and nude. These small statues intended to serve as models for a larger monument. One was sent to the Frankfurt committee and exhibited in the *Städelsche* Art Institute.<sup>104</sup> It provoked great interest as being "before the others [i.e. the other submissions], worthy of a large monument."<sup>105</sup> Bettine personally gave another small sculpture to Goethe in

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<sup>102</sup> "Was uns zunächst noththut, ist ein Meister Rauch unter den Poeten." Fontane, "Unsere lyrische und epische Poesie seit 1848," in *Sämtliche Werke*, 24 vols., ed. Kurt Schreinert (München: Nymphenburger, 1963), XXI:354.

<sup>103</sup> "Alten Kerl im Schlafrock." Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 68; Bettine von Arnim, *Werke und Briefe*, 4 vols., ed. Walter Schmitz and Sibylle von Steinsdorf (Frankfurt am Main: 1986), IV:232.

<sup>104</sup> Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 69.

July 1824 during a visit to Weimar, although the small and delicate Psyche figure arrived broken, leaving intact only the figure of Goethe. Despite this reversal, Goethe approved of Bettine's sketch of the statue, and noted that the statue was not "schicklich" (i.e. unseemly), but could evoke "whimsical" ("neckische") and thought-provoking associations:

The sketch by Frau von Arnim is the most wondrous thing in the world; one cannot deny her applause, or suppress a certain smile, and if one wanted to transport the nice little spoiled child of the old, impossible Götz from its natural state with some rags into the seemly, and allow the stiff, dry figure perhaps to enjoy itself with the grace of the petite creature, so the incident could give rise to a pretty, rather whimsical model. But may it remain as it is – even so, it causes one to think.<sup>106</sup>

From Bettine's point of view, it seems that her identification with Psyche (and of Amor as Goethe?) define Bettine's self-dramatized image as Goethe's muse, in which

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>106</sup> "Die Skizze der Frau v. Arnim ist das Wunderlichste Ding von der Welt; man kann ihr eine Art Beifall nicht versagen, ein gewisses Lächeln nicht unterlassen, und wenn man das kleine nette Schoßkind des alten impassiblen Götzen aus seinem Naturzustande mit einigen Läppchen in den schicklichen befördern wollte, und die starre trockne Figur vielleicht mit einiger Anmut des zierlichen Geschöpfs sich erfreuen ließe, so könnte der Einfall zu einem hübschen Modell recht neckischen Anlaß geben. Doch mag es bleiben wie es ist, auch so gibt es zu denken." *Goethes Briefe (1821-1832), Hamburger Ausgabe*, ed. Karl Robert Mandelkow (Hamburg: Christian Wegner, 1965), IV:115; also see letter of July 3, 1824, No. 1274, to Christoph Ludwig Friedrich Schultz, Weimar.

traces of Mignon but also of Psyche represent the emancipated female artist.<sup>107</sup> Her self-portrait as Goethe's muse, compellingly expressed in *Goethe's Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde* (1835), already emerges from her letters as a twenty-five-year old, when Goethe seemed to have occupied a role not dissimilar to that of Gisela for Joachim, who in 1856 was also twenty-five years old:

I must honestly confess to you that Goethe enters into all the affairs of my life. The beauty of his body and soul, like two powerful pillars, that express the limits of my life. . . .<sup>108</sup>

This early idealization and definition of her role as Goethe's muse extends into *Goethe's Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde*, which opens with a frontispiece depicting an etching of Bettine's design of Psyche and Goethe (1824), and made her famous as an author and artist in German-speaking realms.<sup>109</sup> The book was dedicated to "Seinem Denkmal," and its sales were intended to help finance the statue.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> "Sich emanzipierende weibliche Kunstgeschöpf." Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 47.

<sup>108</sup> "Ich muß Dir aufrichtig bekennen, Goethe dringt in alle Verhältnisse meines Lebens ein. Die Schönheit seines Leibes und seiner Seele stehen wie zwei mächtige Grundpfeiler, die meines Lebens Grenzen bezeigen [...]." Bäumer, "Bettine, Psyche, Mignon" *Bettina von Arnim und Goethe*, 116. Bäumer cites Wilhelm Schellberg/Friedrich Fuchs, *Die Andacht zum Menschenbild* (Jena: Diederichs, 1941), 170. Letter of Bettine to Max Prokop von Freyberg, written in 1810.

<sup>109</sup> Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 70.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

What did Joachim associate with the plaster statue of Psyche to which his letter seems to allude? Joachim's comparison of his music to a sculpture of Psyche dedicated to Gisela ("dein in Tönen gedenkend weil ich keine Psyche habe, die ich in Gyps anräuchern könnte") seems to warrant a closer look. Gisela may well have perceived herself, at least initially, as an embodiment of Psyche in the sense that Bettine von Arnim was described by one scholar – as a muse invented to "mirror" the other's "higher nature" and to unleash the inspiration.<sup>111</sup> Like Bettine, she may have perceived herself initially as (Joachim's) muse and author at the same time. But if Goethe was "exchangeable" for Bettine, and if Joachim was exchangeable for Gisela, Gisela was apparently not exchangeable for Joachim.

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<sup>111</sup> Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 228.

#### **4.4 Gisela's Image of Psyche as Symbol of Transfigured Love**

For those who seek, an answer is provided in the allegorical "Cupid and Psyche."<sup>112</sup>

When Gisela chose the myth of Cupid and Psyche as the centerpiece for her drama *Das Herz der Laiis*, she may have been inspired by her mother's sketches and statues of Goethe and Psyche, or by another of the myriad representations of the myth, such as Canova's statue of 1787 (today in the Louvre), or the frescoes of Raphael in the Villa Farnesina. In addition she may possibly have known some of the few musical and theatrical adaptations<sup>113</sup> or literary interpretations,<sup>114</sup> ranging from various religious readings to views emphasizing a dream state.<sup>115</sup>

Because Gisela's works are fraught with personal references to her circle,<sup>116</sup> to whom she alludes through "epithets, metaphors, similes and imagery,"<sup>117</sup> our aim in this

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<sup>112</sup> Pasquale Accardo, *The Metamorphosis of Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche, Beauty and the Beast, King Kong* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2002), 49.

<sup>113</sup> See Appendix. Plays exist by Lope de Vega (1608), Thomas Heywood (1636), Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1661), Molière (1671), and Corneille (1678), in Accardo, *The Metamorphosis of Apuleius: Cupid and Psyche, Beauty and the Beast, King Kong*, 50.

<sup>114</sup> Poems have been written by Jean de la Fontaine (1669), Christoph Martin Wieland (1767), Goethe *Felsweihe-Gesang* [*An Psyche*], 1772), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1808), John Keats (1816), Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1841), and many others (for a selection, see Accardo, 50).

<sup>115</sup> Vered Lev Kenaan, "Delusion and Dream in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," *Classical Antiquity* 23, No. 2 (Oct. 2004): 247-284.

section is to reveal further Gisela's understanding of the myth, which favored the idea of transfiguration and the conquest of the spiritual over the earthly. Through the myth's allegorical power and through its role as a "play within a play," we may now ask how she viewed Psyche and Cupid as "a reflection of the outer plot on a smaller scale" and what the "poet" Gisela revealed not only about the "outer plot" of the myth but also about the outer plot of her drama, that is, her personal life with Joachim preceding the break-up in 1857.

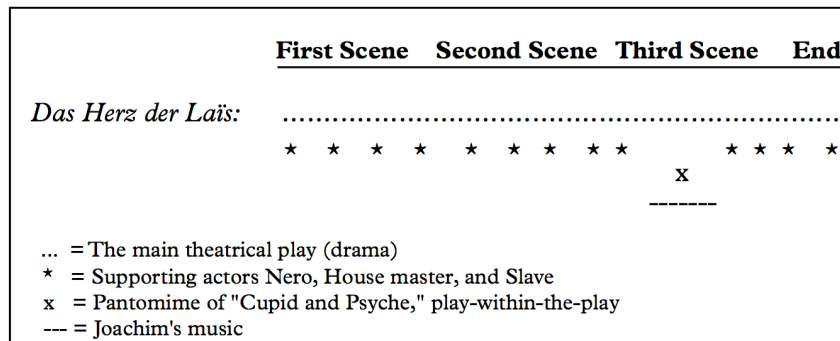
One dominant view of the myth has seen it as representing the dichotomy between spiritual (platonic) and erotic love, between a moral lesson and "mere entertainment."<sup>118</sup> Let us now consider how the myth of Cupid and Psyche is featured in Gisela's drama. First of all, it occupies only part of her one-act play, beginning around the middle and continuing almost to the end.

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<sup>116</sup> Goetze, "Gisela von Arnim," in *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen von Karl Goedeke*, 87: "Überall [...] finden wir eigene Lebensbeziehungen Gisela's eingestreut."

<sup>117</sup> "Beiwörter, Metaphern, Gleichnisse und Bilder." Dramaliewa, 158.

<sup>118</sup> "Because the ass is, proverbially, a lustful creature," see Ben Edwin Perry, "An Interpretation of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," 242; also see Bunzel, 47; he cites Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 235: "Die Geschichte um Amor und Psyche verhandelt den Grenzbereich zwischen menschlicher und göttlicher Welt."



**Figure 9, G. von Arnim, *Das Herz der Laïs*, Structure and Placement of the Myth of "Cupid and Psyche"**

As can be seen in the diagram (Figure 9), Arnim's play *Das Herz der Laïs* contains the myth *mise en abyme*, told mostly in pantomime, beginning slightly after midpoint. The pantomime/myth creates a second narrative layer in addition to the main narrative space of Laïs, who pantomimically embodies Psyche and presents the myth through Psyche's perspective by using Arnim's stage instructions (in addition, Laïs also embodies other characters in the myth to clarify Psyche's encounters with various creatures during her journey to the underworld). These stage instructions are rather complex, and often occupy so much text that at least one reviewer, cited earlier,<sup>119</sup> thought they were impossible to convey through gestures. To give an example:

(Laïs comes closer and closer to Amor, her foot jerks, as if she wants to go back – suddenly a beam from the lamp falls on Amor's countenance, his beauty illuminates like a lightning strike through her soul; she recognizes that it is a god.

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<sup>119</sup> Source see fn. 45 above.



The turn of movements, the inner thanks to the gods with the bliss that lifts her up, is indescribable.)<sup>120</sup>

How is an actress supposed to translate these words into gestures and expressions? As noted before, not only does Laïs dance the myth but it is also conveyed to the audience in words through Nero's and the housekeeper's commentary as they watch Laïs and react in a manner such as: "Oh, look! Now she does this" and "Now that." But even as Laïs dances she adds commentary to move the story forward, which increases the number of simultaneous narrative threads, so that Laïs has access to both worlds – the myth-world and the Laïs-world, while the other characters are only part of the Laïs-world.

Why did Gisela not reveal the myth in her play in a manner that the viewer could easily grasp? This is a complex question for which we may not have all answers. Was the myth so well known that the text would have seemed redundant? Did she want the audience to receive only part of the myth so that, through the pantomime, the whole myth would come to life? Was the complete version saved for a reason? We may propose one answer by turning to the significant letter titled "Pantomime" (Hs#10472a),

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<sup>120</sup> "Laïs geht immer näher auf Amor zu, ihr Fuß zuckt, als wolle sie zurück, – plötzlich fällt ein Strahl der Lampe auf Amor's Antlitz, seine Schönheit leuchtet wie ein Blitz durch ihre Seele; sie erkennt, daß es ein Gott ist. Der Wechsel der Bewegungen, der innige Dank den Göttern mit der Seligkeit, die sie aufwärts trägt, sind unbeschreiblich." See Arnim, *Das Herz der Laïs*, in *Dramatische Werke*, 3 vols. (Bonn: Eduard Weber, 1857): I:308.

which Gisela sent Joachim as she created the work, so that he would know what kind of music to compose. Words that are undecipherable are listed with x (Gisela's underlining):

### Pantomime

Performed by only one person [x]; the others are only to be imagined, etc. Psyche sits next to the sleeping Amor. It is night, smiling happily about his lovely story before he fell asleep – suddenly her suspicions again arise in her heart that her sisters had again [crossed out] awakened in her, since she has never seen him, that her husband is a monster. She chooses to illuminate him, points to a lamp, then shakes her head – once again her suspicions, she listens to his breathing, stands up, she hesitates, lights the lamp, turns back hesitating, pausing, – finally she approaches with the lamp, the first beam that falls on him shows his lovely countenance – she recognizes a god who loves her, he will bear her up, her joy, her bliss exceed all bounds, she points above, and so forth, then her joy yields to childish pleasure, she touches him, his wings, she wants to bend over him, to kiss him, the lamp falls from her hands, Amor awakens, – she is beyond herself over his rage, kneels on the ground, averts his glances. She wants to hold him, but he flies away. Her despair – then she decides to search for him, and now circles the stage in pantomime three times, looking for him, and then lamenting her grief, and with empty eyes looking everywhere for him, she finally becomes exhausted, feels her soul and reaches for Venus, who examines her, since she was found to be more lovely than the goddess. Psyche stands full of humility, promises to do everything to regain Amor, but points fearfully to the ground, as Venus says to her, she should go to the underworld to collect something. She expresses her dread about the shades, the Furies, she imitates the bearing of the Danaides, and throws to Cerberus a [x], then she reaches the king of the underworld, receives the vessel for Venus, and returns with her hair let down, now accustomed to all terror, slowly and sublimely back, and finally gives the goblet to Nero. [translation in Appendix A, part V]

As can be seen, this concise version of the myth is probably inspired by Apuleius but it begins later in the story – at the point when Cupid (Amor in her version) is already asleep and she, with lamp in hand, sees him for the first time. The end of Gisela's

version, to which we shall return in due course, is clearly manipulated, for Nero has nothing to do with the original myth.

Gisela's drafted, "complete," version of the myth is in marked contrast to the fragmented version that was published with her play. Of relevance for us, her complete version of the myth seems to have factored into Joachim's conception of the music that he wrote for the pantomime. In particular, Joachim would probably have been aware of how Gisela began to emphasize the idea of transfigured as opposed to erotic love. Unlike the published sketch of the myth, Joachim's letter refers to "her recognizing a god who will love her and thereby escort her heavenward" ("sie erkennt einen Gott, indem der sie liebt, wird er sie aufwärts tragen.") In other words, through his love Psyche will be "carried upward," or transfigured.<sup>121</sup>

Gisela's subtle yet unmistakable hint at the topos of transfigured love, which we may detect between the lines of Joachim's letters, coincides with a reading of the myth put forth by several contemporary authors, some even from Gisela's own literary circle, in which the duality between spiritual and physical love is emphasized while spiritual love emerges as the ideal. Our starting point is Gisela's letter to Joachim, where she writes, "Amor's love carrying/ lifting Psyche up [to higher realms]." To contextualize

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<sup>121</sup> The "transfigured" interpretation of "Cupid and Psyche" is also evident in Gisela's letter discussed in fn. 88, where she contrasts the earthly Venus to the spiritual Psyche.

this passage, we shall first consider an article from 1851 by Jacob Grimm, a close friend to the Arnim family, then compare it to a passage of Gisela's own reflections, and lastly consult a contemporary journal article published in 1861.

Grimm's essay "Über den Liebesgott," one of several works of the 1850s on mythological subjects, reveals his interpretation of the myth.<sup>122</sup> He speaks about the bond between "Eros and the longing soul" and says: "Here we stand directly by those Platonic souls that long for eternal beauty, so that earthly love is transformed to the spiritual; so there is really a double Eros, the common and the heavenly."<sup>123</sup> Jacob Grimm offers us here a reading of the myth, that on the most basic level emphasizes the "transfiguration" (Verklärung) of physical to spiritual love. Beneath the surface of his words, however, he seems to reveal subtler layers of this transfiguration. His comment "darum eben gab' es einen doppelten Eros, den gemeinen und den himmlischen" seems to refer to a platonic, or rather neoplatonic view of the myth. By "platonic" souls, as it turns out, he in fact means something more specific than today's popular understanding

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<sup>122</sup> Its aim is not only to discuss Eros from the point of view of Greek mythology but also to include "die Vorstellungen anderer Völker," See Jacob Grimm, "Über den Liebesgott. Gelesen in der Akademie am 6. Januar 1851." Gedruckt in der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmlers Buchhandlung, 1851), 1.

<sup>123</sup> "Hier stehen wir unmittelbar an jenen *platonischen* Seelen, die sich zur ewigen Schönheit zurück sehnen und die irdische Liebe ist zur Geistigen [...] verklärt: darum eben gab es einen doppelten Eros, den gemeinen und den himmlischen [...]." Jacob Grimm, "Über den Liebesgott. Gelesen in der Akademie am 6. Januar 1851," 7.

of “platonic love.” Edward John Kenney, who explains in detail the neo-platonic view, says that Apuleius’s use of love and soul as protagonists of “Cupid and Psyche” “inevitably means neo-platonic [...] implications. [...],” which had been already recognized much earlier by analysts of the fifth century and would have been “crystal-clear [...] to any educated ancient reader.”<sup>124</sup> To elucidate what Grimm may have meant by speaking about “doppelten Eros, den gemeinen und den himmlischen,” Kenney cites Plato’s Symposium, which had “distinguished two Aphrodites, Urania (Heavenly, Venus Caelestis) and Pandemos (of the People, Venus Vulgaris), and two Eroses to correspond, their respective provinces being the love of souls and bodies.”<sup>125</sup> Kenney goes on to map this neo-platonic layer onto Cupid and Psyche and to explicate the neoplatonic reading:

Apuleius portrays [in Cupid and Psyche] these dichotomous deities contending for Psyche – a human soul [...] The power which eventually wins the battle is Cupid, revealed in his higher, Platonic guise (Amor I), and the power which loses is Venus Vulgaris (Venus II). It is this Cupid and this Venus which motivate and control the action: Venus I (Caelestis) and Amor II (Vulgaris) figure as largely decorative and (in

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<sup>124</sup> Edwin John Kenney, *Apuleius: Cupid and Psyche* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 16-20; Kenney cites P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 218-219.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 19.

Cupid's case especially) passive foils to their antithetical counterparts. This battle is what the story is really about; Apuleius however handles it in, as it were, counterpoint to the ostensible plot, in which it is Psyche who is for the most part on stage.<sup>126</sup>

What Kenney means here is that as Psyche goes through her journey, she meets Cupid and Venus in different lower and higher "versions." The end of the story, when Cupid brings Psyche to his higher realms, where, with Venus Caelestis' help, she is transformed into a goddess, shows that Cupid in his "higher guise" wins over Venus Vulgaris, or, that spiritual love conquers physical love.

If we return to Gisela's words of "Amor's love lifting Psyche up [to higher realms]," we may begin to see a connection between Grimm's "platonische" interpretation and Gisela's commentary. Let us add one more layer to what Gisela may have meant by turning to a published review she wrote, in 1856,<sup>127</sup> about the actress to whom she dedicated her drama – Adelaide Ristori:

If we imagine the gods and the divine humans on the heavenly clouds, who all would have imagined how their soul would dedicate itself to the highest, in their midst in the blue ether would be Psyche, who for the first time recognized a god in her husband, and through her gestures would promise to be faithful to him eternally, dedicate herself spiritually; so in this position she would appear to Ristori who would feel in her movements and expression her own soul and its

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 20, who cites Walsh, *The Roman Novel*, 198-199.

<sup>127</sup> Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*, 240.

expressed movement toward the eternal and true, and in no way toward the pagan.<sup>128</sup>

Besides invoking the romantic topos of longing through the color blue ("blauer Aether"),<sup>129</sup> Gisela adds two important layers to her interpretation of the myth: first, she suggests that Psyche's love of Eros is a "sacred devotion" – describing something like a spiritual marriage – and emphasizing the spiritual aspect, and second, she asserts that Ristori would not consider the myth as "pagan" – but rather, as something "eternal and true" ("Ewiges und Wahres"). In the dichotomy of pagan vs. "Ewig and Wahr" we can sense that she views the myth as non-pagan, that is, as adhering to Christian principles.

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<sup>128</sup> "Wenn wir uns am Himmel auf den Wolken xx die Götter und göttlichen Menschen dächten, die alle eine Vorstellung davon hätten, wie ihre Seele sich dem Höchsten hingäbe und in ihrer Mitte im blauen Aether wäre Psyche, welche zum ersten Mal den Gott in ihrem Gatten erkennt, und sich durch eine Gebärde ewig ihm zugelobte, *geistig* hingäbe, so würde sie in dieser Stellung der Ristori erscheinen und jene würde in ihrer Bewegung den Ausdruck ihrer eigenen Seele ausgedrückte Bewegung zum Ewigen und Wahren, und keineswegs *heidnisches* empfinden." Dramaliewa, "Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen," 150 [my italics].

<sup>129</sup> The color blue evokes the topos of the "blue flower," a romantic topos signifying longing, as established by Novalis. Goedeke, 87. Gisela's book *Das Heimelchen* also evokes this topos: "The little blue country, for example where the Heimeli family lives, is the country Beerwalde with Wiepersdorf and its shady park, through which, as in fairy tales, today the 'Verlobungsallee' still stretches" ("Das 'blaue Ländchen' z. B., wo die Familie Heimeli wohnt, ist das 'Ländchen' Beerwalde mit Wiepersdorf und seinem schattigen Park, durch den, wie im Märchen, noch heute die 'Verlobungsallee' sich zieht.") The blue flower topos also appears in the works of Mörike. Gisela's influence through Mörike becomes evident in Joachim's letter of May 31, 1856 (*Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 104) and is also mentioned by Dramaliewa, 59; see also "Blaue Blume," in *The Oxford Companion to German Literature*, edited by Garland, Henry, and Mary Garland (Oxford University Press, 1997), <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780198158967.001.0001/acref-9780198158967-e-647>.

Did she equate a “pagan” view with an “erotic” interpretation, thereby responding to some contemporary views that found the myth to be “heidnisch”?<sup>130</sup> After all, myths such as Cupid and Psyche have been viewed since Hellenistic times as “Milesian tales,” that is “very erotic and spicy interpolations.”<sup>131</sup> And we have to think only of the central character in the framing portion of Apuleius’s *Metamorphosen* Lucius (i.e. not the inside story “Cupid and Psyche” but in the outside story of *The Golden Ass*), who is transformed into an ass, “proverbially, a lustful creature”;<sup>132</sup> or, in the story of Cupid and Psyche, of Amor’s nightly visits to unmarried Psyche, whereby an illegitimate child is conceived, “Voluptas” (pleasure), which, although nowhere mentioned by Gisela or Jacob Grimm, surely did not pass unnoticed.

From a contemporary dialogue, published in 1860 in a journal called *Psyche*, *Zeitschrift für die Kenner des menschlichen Seelen- und Geisteslebens*, by Dr. Ludwig Noack,<sup>133</sup> a fictional account of a conversation between three characters (including “Appulejus”), we can confirm that Gisela’s view of the myth as an allegory of “geistige

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<sup>130</sup> Bunzel, *Die Welt umwälzen*, 46.

<sup>131</sup> H. Wagenvoort, “Cupid and Psyche” in *Pietas, Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 84; they were called ‘Milesian tales’ [...] because Miletus or its neighborhood was their original scene of events.”

<sup>132</sup> Accardo, 247.

<sup>133</sup> Ludwig Noack, *Psyche. Zeitschrift für die Kenntnis des menschlichen Seelen- und Geisteslebens* 4, No. 1 (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1861).



Liebe" over "körperliche Liebe" was indeed prevalent around mid-century and referred to as the "neo-platonic" view. In this fictional conversation Appulejus [sic] argues for the "neoplatonic" superiority of spiritual over physical love, while his dialogue partners – with the suggestive names of Psycholipes and Psychopömen – stress the myth as a "little respectable Milesian tale" about "Hetärenkünste" (the arts of ancient female prostitutes).<sup>134</sup> Further, this fictional dialogue also evokes the longing of the soul for "Verklärung." "Appulejus" has the last word by averring: "It is the destiny of all that is natural to transform itself into the sacred."<sup>135</sup>

We might consider now what message the myth of Cupid and Psyche conveyed to Joachim – what he understood – and how it differed from what he wrote to Gisela. If the melodrama project initiated by Gisela was a way to transmit a message to Joachim, was his interpretation of the myth also "neoplatonic"? As we shall now see, there is one more source from whom Joachim may have received insights into the myth – Jacob Grimm himself.

The connections between the von Arnim family and the Grimm brothers are clear enough – members of these families collected and published early in the nineteenth century the two most outstanding collections of folk tales – *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* by

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 246-252.

<sup>135</sup> "Es ist die Bestimmung alles Natürlichen, sich ins Geistige zu verklären." Ibid., 246.

the Grimm brothers, and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* by Achim von Arnim (Gisela's father) and Clemens Brentano (Bettine von Arnim's brother). It is not widely known, however, that through Joachim's close friendship with Herman Grimm (1828-1901), Wilhelm Grimm's son, and through his infatuation with Gisela von Arnim, Achim's daughter, Joachim was in the center of the circle within which these two poetic folk collections converged. Although Gisela was presumably "promised" to Herman as a fiancée, Herman Grimm and Joachim frequently corresponded, sending each other drafts, works, publications, and criticism, and they even undertook, among other activities, a trip to Venice without Gisela.<sup>136</sup> Not surprisingly, then, Joachim, in fact, knew both Grimm brothers fairly well.

From 1853 on, when Joachim lived in Hanover, he frequently travelled to Berlin to visit the von Arnims and stayed, at least on two occasions,<sup>137</sup> at the Grimm brothers' residence for a few days. Especially Jacob Grimm, or "Apapa" as he was known by his close family and by Joachim,<sup>138</sup> is mentioned several times in Joachim's letters, whose

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<sup>136</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 100, letter of May 19, 1856.

<sup>137</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:234, fn1, a letter from Joachim to Herman Grimm on December 5, 1854 reports about the visit at the brothers' house; furthermore, Joachim writes in the middle of March 1856 that he planned on visiting the Grimm brothers on his next visit to Berlin, I:325; another stay at the brothers' house is reported in Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 46, letter of July 3, 1854.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

interest in the brothers' works seems to have lasted throughout his life.<sup>139</sup> One letter<sup>140</sup> written when Joachim stayed at Jacob's house, tells us of his accompanying Jacob to the "Akademie," that is, the "Königlich-Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften" in Berlin, where Jacob Grimm taught since 1841.<sup>141</sup> Joachim wrote to Gisela on that day: "My love, today I'm eating with the Grimms and going afterwards with Jacob to the senate of wise men – as an ignorant tribune I can therefore not come to your table, and so after the reading I will be with you at 6:00 and relate what I heard, if in the Academy I can concentrate despite all my thoughts about you. Adieu for so long, always your J.J."<sup>142</sup> We can only conjecture about the "Vorlesung" that Jacob Grimm held for the "senate of the wise"; roughly two weeks later, on July 16, he signed the foreword to the third edition of his *Deutsche Mythologie* (first ed. 1835; second ed. 1844). Perhaps Grimm spoke to Joachim during this visit, about his ideas on mythology, possibly including

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<sup>139</sup> Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, III:427, Joachim read the *Briefwechsel* of the Grimm brothers in July 1893. Furthermore, Jacob Grimm sent Joachim the latest *Wörterbuch* to deliver to his friend Woldemar Bargiel in July 1857, which gave him the opportunity to see the *Wörterbuch*, I:432.

<sup>140</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 46, letter of July 3, 1854.

<sup>141</sup> Scherer, Wilhelm, "Grimm, Jacob," in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (1879), <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118542257.html?anchor=adb>

<sup>142</sup> "Liebe, ich esse heute bei Grimms und gehe nachher mit dem Jacob G[rimm] in den Senat der weisen Männer – als Unwissenheitstribun, kann also nicht zu Tisch kommen, dafür will ich um 6 Uhr nach der Vorlesung bei Dir sein und davon erzählen, wenn ich in der Akademie vor Gedanken an Dich zum Hören komme. Adieu so lange. Immer D. J.J." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 46, letter of July 3, 1854.

even the myth of Cupid and Psyche. In any case, Joachim could well have read Grimm's article "Über den Liebesgott" and possibly have known of his "neoplatonic" interpretation of the myth.

Nonetheless, we need to add one more detail to the narrative of the years 1856 and 1857 before we take up in Chapter 5 Joachim's music for Gisela's pantomime and consider its connection to his conception of "psychological music." Before the lovers' break-up in May 1857 – after which Joachim stopped writing to her for almost two years – several letters suggest that the break-up did not occur because of disharmony but rather because the relationship between Gisela and Joachim had come to an unsustainable point, when either Joachim or Herman had to renounce his claim on Gisela. In November 1857, during the silent period between Gisela and Joachim, Herman summarized what had occurred in May: "The triangular life that we led had become impossible for me; either you or I had to give up our position toward G."<sup>143</sup>

In the days leading to the last letter before the break-up, the correspondence between Gisela and Joachim clarifies that Gisela decided to stop the contact. Joachim wrote: "My Gisel, I still call you even though I have read your lines in which you swear

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<sup>143</sup> "Das Leben zu Dreien, wie wir's führten, war für mich eine Unmöglichkeit geworden; entweder mußt Du der G. gegenüber Deine Stellung aufgeben oder ich." Joachim, *Joachim Briefe*, I:458, letter from Herman Grimm to Joachim on November 11, 1857.

to me that I should not disturb your decision to renounce me.”<sup>144</sup> At the same time the letters seem to suggest that, at least in her opinion, the decision to enter a period of silence was an expression of their “higher existence” (“höhere Wesen”) as the reality of the relationship became increasingly painful: “I have no words for your last letter. I will not torment you and myself. The twitching of decomposed victims is not expressive of our highest existence.”<sup>145</sup> The penultimate letter, however, speaks of a ritual-like event that throws a different light onto the renunciation: the mutual return of rings. Joachim’s letter contained a ring – at least a preliminary one – after he had already received hers, and mentioned, in a sense, a future:

For a few days I have been wearing your ring with your hair and it is so indescribably sweet for me to feel something of you on my finger. But with the reservation that you should you wear the plain hoop, until I, if I can once play properly my life’s passion on golden strings, should give you a more noble one. I find stone and gold actually noble. Ah, such a sparkling ruby, red and fiery like my heart’s blood.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> “Meine Gisel, Noch nenne ich Dich so obgleich ich Deine Zeilen gelesen worin Du mich beschwörst ich sollte Dich in Deinem Entschluss mir zu entsagen nicht stören.” Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 167, letter of May 3, 1857.

<sup>145</sup> “Ich habe keine Worte auf Deinen letzten Brief. Ich will Dich und mich nicht quälen. Das Zucken zerlegter Opfer ist unserem höchsten Wesen nicht wohlgefällig.” Ibid., letter from the beginning of May 1857.

<sup>146</sup> “Ich trage seit ein paar Tagen Deinen Ring mit Deinem Haar und es ist mir so unbeschreiblich süß etwas von dir am Finger zu fühlen [...] Aber mit dem Vorbehalt sollst Du den schlichten Reif tragen, daß ich Dir, wenn meine Lebenslust einmal recht auf goldnen Saiten spielen kann, einen edlern reichen darf. Ich finde Steine und Gold wirklich edel. Ach, so einen gluthsprühenden Rubin, roth [sic] und feurig wie mein Herzblut [...]” Ibid., 168, letter of May 10, 1857.

If Psyche and Cupid, according to the platonic interpretation, ends in a realm removed from all earthly suffering, where Psyche and Cupid, soul and love, enter a union transformed from the earthly and physical, into a divine, spiritual love, and if Joachim may have known the myth's interpretation through Gisela and/or Jacob Grimm and through the collaboration with Gisela on *Das Herz der Laïs* – we may ask whether, through the myth's structure of *mise en abyme*, we can see in Cupid and Psyche a mirror of "life itself."

Joachim relied on Gisela as someone who, apparently like nobody else, could reinforce and unleash his creative energy. Presumably her significance for him was holistic. A "transfigured" relationship such as that of Psyche and Cupid once they were joined in the higher realms presumably did not serve his personal and creative inclinations. But nevertheless, a moment of "transfiguration" did occur in Joachim and Gisela's relationship, which we can see as the central story Psyche and Cupid superimposed on our reading of the framing story:<sup>147</sup> the exchange of rings. This gesture marks a ritual of union between Joachim and Gisela – or between Joachim and his

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<sup>147</sup> Lucien Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 57. Dällenbach suggests superimposing "Cupid and Psyche" on a reading of the framing story of Lucius in Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*.

Psyche – on a level devoid of any physical contact, making it a union of their “higher beings,” or higher versions of themselves, in the neoplatonic view.

## 5. Resisting Melodramatic Music? Joachim's Music for the Pantomime Scene of "Cupid and Psyche" in Gisela von Arnim's Play *Das Herz der Laïs* (1857)

Pasted on the front cover of Joachim's *Versuch eines Tanzes*<sup>1</sup> is a drawing of a cherub with curled hair, playing the double-piped Greek aulos<sup>2</sup>; the lower right hand corner bears the letter G (see Illustration 7).



Illustration 7, #Bra:Ac24, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg

The G stands for "Gisela," implying that she drew the image and gave this notebook, which binds eleven leaves (twenty-two pages) of music staff paper, to Joachim for his composition, who then obliged by filling twenty of the pages with music. The correspondence surrounding this music, as well as the piece itself and the drawing

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<sup>1</sup> Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Ms. #Bra:Ac24, p. 1 of the oblong front cover of the score to Joseph Joachim's *Versuch eines Tanzes*.

<sup>2</sup> This detail is obvious only from the manuscript, not the published version.



we are about to examine, help establish that Joachim's *Versuch eines Tanzes* (1856) was written as music for a section of Gisela von Arnim's play *Das Herz der Laiis*, which would presumably have been performed as a melodramatic scene with pantomime, had the collaboration come to fruition. The melodramatic scene in question was to present the story of Cupid and Psyche. But what does the angel on the score cover represent and symbolize? The butterfly wings would point to Psyche,<sup>3</sup> while the aulos is nowhere, to my knowledge, associated with this mythological figure.

The first clue to a possible source of inspiration for this drawing leads to Weimar and to Bettine's circle, specifically Goethe's residence, the *Haus am Frauenplan*, visited several times by Bettine von Arnim.<sup>4</sup> Here a large painting decorated one wall, illustrating the winged angelic being with the aulos, in a remarkably similar way as in Gisela's drawing. But in that painting (see Illustration 8) the being is not depicted alone; rather, it appears with another angel-like figure with unmistakable butterfly wings,

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<sup>3</sup> Butterfly wings are symbolic of Psyche iconography that originates before Apuleius (125-180 AD) whose text of the myth "Cupid and Psyche" succeeds many existing graphic representations of Psyche, see Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 151. Moritz, in *Götterlehre*, says: "The name Psyche signifies a butterfly as well as a soul. The most tender concepts of death and life are woven into this poem, which at the same time covers the dread of the shades' world with a soft veil." ("Der Name Psyche bedeutet sowohl einen Schmetterling als auch die Seele. – Die zartesten Begriffe von Tod und Leben sind in diese Dichtung eingewebt, welche gleichsam über die Schauer der Schattenwelt einen sanften Schleier deckt.") Cited in Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 169. Also see Ch. 4, fn. 11 (Psyche's wings and Plato's "chariot analogy" in *Phaedrus*).

<sup>4</sup> One of Bettine's visits to Goethe occurred in 1807. See *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft*, ed. Erich Schmidt and Bernhard Suphan, 36 Vols. (Weimar: Goethe Gesellschaft, 1899), XIV:348-349.

enabling us to identify it as Psyche. Dated Weimar, 1795, the painting is by Johann Heinrich Meyer and shows Amor playing an aulos for Psyche (see Illustration 8).<sup>5</sup>



**Illustration 8, Johann Heinrich Meyer, *Der flötende Amor weckt Psyche aus dem Todesschlaf*, Wall Painting at Goethe's Haus am Frauenplan, Weimar, 1795**



**Illustration 9, Angelika Kauffmann "Glückliche Psyche traure nicht mehr," 1790**

Illustration 9 offers another painting, completed a few years earlier and using the same motive. It appears that Meyer imitated a painting by Angelika Kauffmann (1741-1807), a widely acclaimed eighteenth-century artist. One of her renditions of Cupid and Psyche, titled "Glückliche Psyche traure nicht mehr" ("Happy Psyche, do not grieve any longer") provides another possible link to Gisela, Joachim, and the image of Amor with the aulos.

Angelika Kaufmann promoted in her art new ways of perceiving gender and reflected the larger discourse about changing gender roles in society at the end of the

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<sup>5</sup> Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 148-149.

eighteenth century. She is known for the moralizing impact of her paintings, achieved by refraining from the voyeuristic perspective.<sup>6</sup> In the painting above (Illustration 9) Psyche appears in a death-like sleep – after her ascent from the underworld and after having, impermissibly, applied the ointment from Proserpina, which she was supposed to deliver to Venus. Her head is turned down, while Amor, eyes turned up, plays the aulos with the intention of restoring her life through his music – and not, as in many versions of the myth, with his arrow. Kauffman herself, it seems, was yet another participant in the Cupid and Psyche *role play* that grew up around the myth in the eighteenth century; in the 1780s Kauffman continued the “Darmstädter pairing games” (“Paarungsspiele”) of the 1770s, a tradition established twenty years earlier.<sup>7</sup> Involved in this particular role-play – which occurred in Rome during the late 1780s – were Kauffmann, Goethe, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Caroline Herder.<sup>8</sup> The participants’

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<sup>6</sup> Holm speaks of the “affektregulierende” as opposed to “affektgesteuerte” approaches in Kauffmann’s representation of Psyche; see Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 148. Kaufmann’s work can be seen as an “affect-regulating” response to “voyeuristic” texts, which offered new psychological readings of the myth in light of female pleasure, such as La Fontaine’s *Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon* (1669); see Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 147-149 and Kirsten Dickhaut, “L’Amour né du regard et ses dimensions poétologiques: Les Amours de Psyché et de Cupidon de Jean de La Fontaine,” in *Les Métamorphoses de Psyché*, Carine Barbafieri, ed. (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 149. See also, Ch. 4, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Goethe established contact with Kauffmann in Rome during his “Italienische Reise” in 1786, when Kauffmann, a resident of Rome since 1782, instructed him in drawing and also painted his

desire for “a reunion” (“ein Wiedersehen”) was “partly anticipated concretely, partly hoped to occur in the afterlife”<sup>9</sup> – hence the “grief” (“Trauer”) of Psyche/Angelika over being separated from her soulmates.

But the sadness, or abating sadness, of “Glückliche Psyche, traure nicht mehr” plumbs only one interpretive layer of the picture. Reading it in “mytho/biographical” terms,<sup>10</sup> the image of Amor awakening Psyche with his aulos from her death-like sleep holds a special meaning for Holm: “The reason why this association of partnership of winged Psyche to Amor is so attractive is because it adds to the seriousness and to the questions of the death topic connotations of the unserious dalliance or of a satisfied sensual life.”<sup>11</sup> In the image of Gisela, then, Psyche is presumably depicted in a deadly

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portrait in 1787. Herder, who introduced Bettine to the term “Psyche” (Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 229), travelled to Rome in 1788-1789, established close contacts with Kauffmann, and reported about his journey to his wife, Caroline, then in Weimar under Goethe’s watch but, nevertheless, included *in absentia* in the “Seelenfreundschaft” between her husband and Kauffmann. Although Kauffmann and Caroline Herder never met, they indulged in a friendship-based role-play, initiated through Johann Gottfried Herder’s delivery of a gift from Kauffmann for Caroline – a ring with the butterfly as a sign of their friendship. And so the Darmstadt role-play acted out in Johann Gottfried Herder’s and Caroline Herder’s *Brautbriefe* of the 1770s was extended, after his return to Weimar, to a long-distance friendship between Caroline/Johann Gottfried Herder and Angelika.

<sup>9</sup> “Teils konkret geplant, teils für das Elysium erhofft.” Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 149.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 27.

sleep, while other layers of meaning are, nevertheless, never entirely absent, according to Holm.

The other clue from Gisela's drawing of Amor and the aulos leads to Aloys Hirt, and his *Bilderbuch für Mythologie* of 1816, which Bettine knew, as a letter of 1824 confirms.<sup>12</sup> It contains a series of copperplate engravings arranged in a narrative order, each revealing one scene of the myth. The motive of Amor with the aulos appears as the sixth and seventh of nine images,<sup>13</sup> placed after Psyche's journey to the underworld. Most likely Hirt took his inspiration from Kauffmann.

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<sup>11</sup> "Diese Bindung der geflügelten Psyche an Amor ist eben deshalb so attraktiv, weil sie in den Ernst und die Sinnfragen des Todesthemas auch Konnotationen zum unernsten Tändelspiel oder zu erfülltem sinnlichen Leben mit einholt." Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 150.

<sup>12</sup> Petra Maisak, "Bettina von Arnim als Zeichnerin," in *Achim von Arnim und sein Kreis*, ed. Steffen Dietzsch and Ariane Ludwig (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 169, 171; she cites Bettine von Arnim, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. Heinz Härtl, Ulrike Landfester und Sybille von Steinsdorff, 4 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 2004), IV:232, letter of February 3, 1824.

<sup>13</sup> Table XXXII (appendix) in Aloys Hirt, *Bilderbuch für Mythologie, Archäologie und Kunst*, vol. 2 (Berlin, Leipzig: Nauck's Buchhandlung, 1816).



**Illustration 10, Aloys Hirt, *Bilderbuch für Mythologie*, Copper Engraving to “Amor and Psyche,” 1816**

Scene 6: “Eros, the helpful, hurries to excite Psyche, deeply dormant in stygian sleep, through the sweet tones of his double aulos to new life.”<sup>14</sup>



**Illustration 11 Aloys Hirt, *Bilderbuch für Mythologie*, Copper Engraving to “Amor and Psyche,” 1816**

Scene 7: “The same flute player appears again, approaching, with the veiled Psyche behind him, the initiation into mystical harmony, represented through the sitting Amor with the lyre.”<sup>15</sup>

Hirt notes that his illustrations present an older version of the myth that precedes Apuleius.<sup>16</sup> In Hirt’s view the myth describes Psyche’s fall to sin (“Sündenfall”) and purification (“Läuterung”) through a series of trials (“Prüfungen”) that, as in the platonic interpretation of the myth, involve two representations of Amor/Eros/Cupid –

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<sup>14</sup> “Eros, der Hülfreiche [*sic*], eilt herbei, die in stygischen Schlaf Versunkene durch die süßen Töne der Doppelflöte zu neuem Leben aufregend.”

<sup>15</sup> “Derselbe Flötner erscheint wieder, die hinter ihm folgende umhüllte Psyche einführend zur Weihe in die geheimnisvolle Harmonie, welche durch den mit der Leyer sitzenden Amor personifiziert wird.”

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 222. Also see Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 130-131.

one a “common” (“gemein”) Eros, who challenges Psyche with earthly desires, and another, “helpful”/“heavenly” (“hülfreich”/“himmlisch”) Eros, who leads her – as goddess and bride – into his kingdom.<sup>17</sup> The first scene with the aulos (Illustration 10) describes the “Flötner” who awakens Psyche from her “stygischem Schlafe.”<sup>18</sup> He reappears in the next scene and with his double flute leads Psyche to her “consecration into the mysterious harmony” (“Weihe in die geheimnisvolle Harmonie”), in which Harmony is personified by yet another Amor, this one playing a lyre. In other words, Hirt offers not two, but three representations of Amor/Cupid/Eros: two Erosen (“gemein”/“irdisch” and “hülfreich”/“himmlisch”) and Amor with the lyre as an all-

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<sup>17</sup> Hirt, 222.

<sup>18</sup> “Although of divine origin, she was shut up in her body as if in a dungeon, and regarded as one cast down by sinfulness and error, who had to be purified gradually through a series of trials, in order to be capable of higher views of things, and to be blessed with true passion in this as well as that life. Two Eroses, the one, common, the other, heavenly, stood on her path: the one, the seducer, drew her to the earth; the other, the helpful, turned her glance toward primeval beauty and the divine, which finally, victorious over his rival, led the proven one home as his wife and sealed the eternal band with a divine kiss.” (“Obwohl göttlichen Ursprunges ward sie, im Leibe wie in einem Kerker eingeschlossen, als eine dem Sündenfall und dem Irrthum unterworfen betrachet, die durch den Gang der Prüfungen allmählig geläutert werden musste, um der höhern Ansichten der Dinge fähig, und der wahren Lust sowohl in diesem als in jenem Leben theilhaftig zu werden. Zwei Erosen, der eine der gemeine, und der andere der himmlische, standen auf ihrer Bahn: jener, der Verführer, zog sie zum Irdischen; dieser, der Hülfreiche, wandte ihren Blick zum Urschönen und Göttlichen, welcher endlich als Sieger über seinen Nebenbuhler die Bewährtgefundene als Braut heimführt und mit dem himmlischen Kusse das ewige Band besiegelt.”) Ibid.

encompassing personification of “Harmonie” who initiates Psyche into the heavenly realm.

Promoting a moral, theological interpretation (Holm refers to it as “moraltheologisch”<sup>19</sup>), whereby the soul/lust dichotomy (manifest in Amor’s torturing of Psyche) is juxtaposed with the theological soul/immortality dichotomy, as Psyche progresses from her “Sündenfall” to the “Läuterung” through fire, this view shares with Kauffmann’s interpretation an “affect regulating” rather than “voyeuristic” meaning. Hirt’s interpretation, indeed, resembles the “platonic” view of the myth, according to which Psyche strives to leave behind the physical world, including the “earthly” (“irdisch”) Amor and physical love, similar to the view we explored at the end of Ch. 4.

Whether Gisela found her inspiration through Hirt’s book or through a first- or second-hand knowledge of Kauffmann’s art or Meyer’s wall painting at Goethe’s Weimar residence remains unclear – both would have confirmed the view of the myth she communicated to Joachim about a “transfigured” Psyche. What is clear, though, is that Gisela’s Amor appears conspicuously *without* Psyche, as if she was left out on purpose from a “scene” that usually depicts both. Thus, the cover of Joachim’s score would have raised a rich network of literary/artistic associations relating to the Psyche

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<sup>19</sup> Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 130.



myth. On the most general level it symbolizes separation and raises the question: Whom is Amor waking from her deadly sleep with his music?

### **5.1 Versuch eines Tanzes (1856) and Double Bars**

The drawing of Amor with the aulos – and the omission of Psyche – supply the overarching frame for this chapter. Joachim's music notated inside the notebook is equally evocative but at the same time confronts us with questions to which simple answers might not exist. Part of the answer, however, might be found by tracing the music's apparent resistance to a clear generic classification – not uncommon for melodrama as a genre and works written in a melodramatic style – and to a stylistic definition within Joachim's style of the 1850s.

Working backwards, *Versuch eines Tanzes* (1856) seems to suggest that Joachim's compositional style and aesthetic changed slightly between his Weimar years, 1850-1852, and the later 1850s, the time of his counterpoint exchange with Brahms, with whom and with others Joachim joined to declare publicly his opposition to Liszt in 1860.<sup>20</sup> But Joachim's aesthetic did not simply shed its New German sympathies in favor of an absolute aesthetic. Rather, what changed slightly during these years was Joachim's *musical* style and syntax. The attached extramusical *meaning* of Joachim's music, on the

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<sup>20</sup> Alan Walker, et al., "Liszt, Franz."

other hand, maintained throughout the late 1850s its clear referentiality to text, literature, songs, and/or ciphers, of which this short piano piece written for a melodramatic scene with pantomime is a good example. Even in the later 1850s, certainly as late as 1856, his music remained inspired by his immediate literary surroundings and his closest relationships, above all Gisela von Arnim.

When Joachim proclaimed in a letter to Liszt in 1857, “Your music is completely inaccessible to me; it contradicts everything that nourished my abilities from my early youth from the spirit of our great composers. If it was thinkable that I had to renounce what I learned to love and honor from their creations, for me your sonorities would replace nothing from the enormous, destroying desert,”<sup>21</sup> Joachim was doing more than just turning his back on Liszt’s programmatic aesthetic. Indeed, this quotation has been used too readily to elucidate Joachim’s dramatic pivot in the late 1850s towards a presumed absolutist aesthetic, which appears too simplistic when we contemplate the little-discussed *Versuch eines Tanzes*, conceived as part of a melodrama, that is, strictly

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<sup>21</sup> “Ich bin Deiner Musik gänzlich unzugänglich; sie widerspricht Allem, was mein Fassungsvermögen aus dem Geist unserer Großen seit früher Jugend als Nahrung sog. Wäre es denkbar, [...] daß ich je dem entsagen müßt’, was ich aus ihren Schöpfungen [i.e. Schöpfungen der Großen] lieben und verehren lernte [...], Deine Klänge würden mir nichts von der ungeheuren, vernichtenden Öde ausfüllen,” *Joachim Briefe*, I:442, letter from Joachim to Franz Liszt of August 27, 1857.

speaking, a programmatic genre. What Joachim rejected in Liszt was, apparently, not simply the idea of music created with, or for, a programmatic subject.

On the one hand, Joachim's short piano piece for *Das Herz der Laiis* digresses from his Weimar style (or, rather, the style of his three early overtures, of which some were conceived in Weimar but all were finished after Joachim's move to Hanover) by seemingly professing an "absolute," non-referential *musical* aesthetic. However, while its syntax, texture and periodicity defy any surface-referentiality, the textual and visual qualities of his piece – somewhat concealed as tempo instructions – do reveal a clear programmatic layer of meaning. What is more, they align convincingly with the plot of Cupid and Psyche, as if he intended to compose music for a melodrama – seemingly following conventions in his closest surroundings – but then, musically speaking, did not.

Admittedly, exactly how Gisela's libretto and Joachim's music were to have been coordinated remains vague, due to the lack of an annotated score (i.e. a score showing her text aligned with his music<sup>22</sup>). Still, from a musical standpoint we can appreciate that Joachim's music differs from other melodramas for piano or orchestra, such as the piano

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<sup>22</sup> Edward Nye, *Mime, Music and Dance on the Eighteenth-Century Stage: The Ballet d'Action* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 186. Nye points out that the surviving annotated scores in eighteenth-century genres such as the *ballet d'action* are the "'hardest' evidence we have of an ephemeral art" and are needed to discern how music and movement were aligned. They were "used by composers and choreographers to time the music to the action [pantomime]."

ballades of the 1850s by Schumann<sup>23</sup> or the melodramatic scenes by Mendelssohn, two composers closest to Joachim. But Joachim's music also differs from genres such as the contemporary ballets, successors of the eighteenth-century *ballet d'action*, which "at its most imitative, [could musically] [...] mimic action on stage, underlining it, or making it significantly more perceptible to the spectator,"<sup>24</sup> such as stormy music for "depicting" a storm.

Each of these in its own way is more clearly referential and reveals a considerable degree of text-music interaction characteristic of the melodrama, promoted by established musical topoi<sup>25</sup> or by the composer's ability to create different narrative planes, as Mendelssohn did by musically juxtaposing different worlds in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1843): the world of the play (i.e. of the main characters of Shakespeare's play), and the world of "Pyramus and Thisbe," the play within the play (Nos. 10-12, composed as melodrama). These examples of melodramatic subgenres – the piano ballade, the *ballet d'action* and a section within incidental music to a play – demonstrate

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<sup>23</sup> They include Schumann's "Die Flüchtlinge," and "Ballade vom Haidenknaben" in *Zwei Balladen* Op. 122 (1852-53), and *Schön Hedwig* Op. 106 (1849).

<sup>24</sup> Nye, 193.

<sup>25</sup> Jacqueline Waeber, *En Musique dans le Texte: Le Mélodrame, de Rousseau à Schoenberg* (Paris: Van Dieren Éditeur, 2005), 265, mentions various motives suitable to evoking established musical topoi.

just a few of the myriad ways text and music can interact in the diverse and large category of melodrama. Furthermore we know for sure that Joachim knew Mendelssohn's work. Joachim encountered Schumann's melodramas later in 1856 and may or may not have known them in July 1856. Presumably Joachim was not familiar with nineteenth-century generic successors of the *ballet d'action*, while Gisela likely was. Nonetheless, we can draw insights from these melodramatic/pantomimic genres to show how contemporaries of Joachim worked with melodrama. Indeed, Joachim's understanding of what music for a melodramatic pantomime scene was supposed to do seems to be revealed in part in its non-conformity to existing traditions. Instead, he came up with his own idiosyncratic solution to account for Gisela's text, which provided the basis for his music.

The music that survives in Joachim's piano score is only 232 measures long (plans for expanding it seem to have been contemplated but were then abandoned).<sup>26</sup> Not published until 1983, Joachim's music, to our knowledge, has never been performed with Gisela's play. Though small in scope, the piece yields considerable insights; however, the Joachim-literature has yet to take notice of this piece beyond, at the most,

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<sup>26</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:352, letter from Joachim to Gisela of July 2, 1856. He offers to compose her "something better" ("so will ich versuchen, Dir etwas besseres zu componiren als das heutige") and asks her to send a plan clarifying "how long, how many tempos and perhaps meters." ("Dann schicke mir einen Plan Deines Tanzes, wie lange, wie viele Takte, wie viel Tempos und vielleicht die Taktarten.")

mentioning it.<sup>27</sup> Also, the literature on Gisela von Arnim has accessed neither the melodrama nor pertinent unpublished letters, some of which are cited in this chapter. While the tradition of literary role play about “Cupid and Psyche” is generally well documented (see Ch. 4), only one scholar has noted the Psyche/butterfly-personification in Gisela’s letters by acknowledging that Joachim knew Gisela as his “butterfly soul” (“Schmetterlingsseele”),<sup>28</sup> a subtle allusion to one of the best-known iconographic representations of Psyche (see fn. 3). The same scholar proposed that Gisela’s literary personae were often taken from her life<sup>29</sup> – a thesis her melodrama may further support, if, in fact, as we have seen in Ch. 4, the two did explore artistic allusions to “Cupid and Psyche.” Furthermore, nowhere in the von Arnim or Joachim literature does the term

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<sup>27</sup> Moser’s biography *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, II:11, mentions another project of Gisela’s for which Joachim wrote dance music, *Rischiaringa*, but mistakenly concludes that this collaboration “has not gotten any siblings.” While there is something to Moser’s comment that “dance music and operatic magic were too distant from his musical mind” (“Tanzmusik und Opernzauber [lagen] seinem Musiksinn zu ferne”) it appears that Moser’s point of view was influenced by Joachim’s performance aesthetic and public persona (see Leistra-Jones, “Virtue and Virtuosity: Brahms, the Concerto, and the Politics of Performance in the Late-Nineteenth Century,” 81-82, 125, 146). That Joachim did care about Gisela’s ballets is also obvious from one of the last letters of the printed correspondence of Gisela and Joachim, in which he regrets that the collaborations were not brought to an end. *Joachim’s Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 169, letter of May 16, 1857.

<sup>28</sup> Dramaliewa, “Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen,” 39.

<sup>29</sup> Goetze, “Gisela von Arnim,” in *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen von Karl Goedeke*, VII:87.

“melodrama” appear, although Joachim wrote this piece and other music for melodramas in the 1850s.<sup>30</sup>

## II

### *“Double-bars,” “Tempo” Markings, and Instructions in Versuch eines Tanzes*

In *Versuch eines Tanzes* (Figure 10) Joachim uses seven double bars, four of which are not aligned with meter or key changes, and therefore invite further speculation regarding their function:

m. 8 ||

m. 32 ||

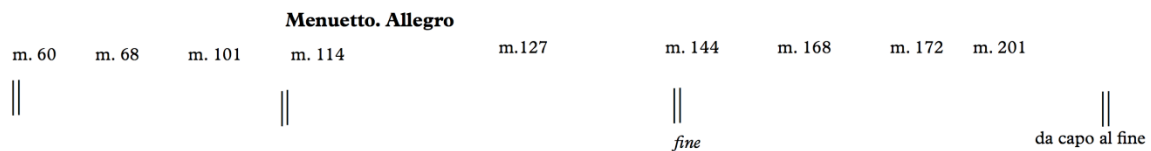
m. 60 ||

m. 144 ||

<b>Gebunden, doch fast marschartig feierlich</b>		<b>In sanft belebter Bewegung</b>		
m. 1	m. 9	m. 24	m. 32	m. 48

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<sup>30</sup> Joseph Joachim, *Melodrama zu einer Schillergedenkfeier*, presumably composed in 1859 for Schiller’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. See Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, #BRA-Ac4.



For assistance in interpreting the significance of these double bars, we shall again turn in part to Barry Cooper, who has thoroughly investigated the device in nineteenth-century music.<sup>31</sup> As simple and self-explanatory as it might seem, the double bar can have important functions beyond those for which it is typically used. The strong presence of the double bar in Joachim's oeuvre almost allows seeing it as a trademark of Joachim's compositional language. Besides in *Abendglocken* Op. 5 No. 2, Joachim frequently used the double bar in his *Variationen über ein Irisches Elfenlied* (1856) for piano,<sup>32</sup> written in the same year as *Versuch eines Tanzes*. But the double bars in *Versuch* differ strikingly in their function; indeed, they are crucial to understanding the story that Joachim attempts to tell.

The shape of double bars, indeed, shows considerable diversity. The shapes most relevant for Joachim are the double bar in form of a zigzag line (the “m-type”)<sup>33</sup> and the

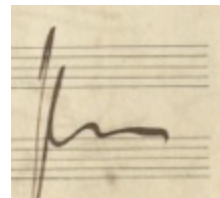
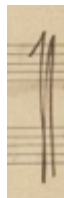
<sup>31</sup> Cooper, "Beethoven and the Double Bar," 458 ff.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Struck, ed., *Variationen über ein Irisches Elfenlied* (1856) (Hamburg: J. Schuberth & Co., 1989).

<sup>33</sup> Cooper, 462, mentions a bar line in form of a vertical “zigzag line” (of gradually diminishing height), which is also referred to as the “m-type” bar line.



plain double bar. In Beethoven's music after 1802 the former was used to mark strong conclusive endings of movements while for inconclusive sections another sign was used; occasionally Beethoven would use the m-type "at a major structural point within a movement, where there is a firm tonic cadence and change of metre,"<sup>34</sup> while the plain double bar, two vertical lines, was used "invariably to denote an internal division or structural boundary, signifying that there was more to come."<sup>35</sup> In Joachim's *Abendglocken*, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, and other compositions, we also have to distinguish between one sign used for strongly conclusive ends and another to mark "internal division or structural boundaries." Joachim, like Beethoven after 1802, uses a the plain double bar (Ex. 78) for subtler, inner divisions of movements and the "zigzag" line, or "m-type" (Ex. 78 right) to mark strong conclusive ends.



**Example 78, Joachim, "Plain" Double Bar and "m-type"**

However, modern editions of Joachim's music inaccurately render and interpret the various double bars and their functions, such as in one example where both the plain

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<sup>34</sup> Cooper, 466.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 467.

double bar and the zigzag double bar of Joachim's manuscript are understood as solid ending bar lines (thin-thick double bar, the standard concluding sign used today). The confusion partly stems from the problem that double bars were used at the time to signal key and/or meter changes *and* to imply *attacca* from one movement to the next, while many of those double bars, which do not coincide with such a function and therefore perhaps seem incomprehensible to a modern editor, have been reinterpreted as solid thin-thick double bars and are missing from some published editions.

Essentially, Joachim's double bars carry meaning that goes beyond their standard function, as the following discussion brings to light. In *Versuch eines Tanzes* a story is told that relies significantly on the double bar. By synchronizing his double bars with textual stage instructions, which cue pantomimic movements, Joachim effectively related his music not only to Gisela's plot but also to the genre of melodrama, effectively depicting the plot visually in his musical score, and thereby covering his ground for one of the elements usually present in melodrama. If melodrama usually incorporates music, spoken dialogue, and in some subcategories gesture/pantomime, Joachim's notating of gestures of the plot in the musical score reveals an idiosyncratic pantomimic element. Furthermore, it shows that he imagined or thought about the details of an actress's pantomimic movements.

The three movements of Joachim's *Versuch* contain seven double bars, of which two serve to mark key changes (mm. 24 and 114). These two are at the same time placed at the end of a movement and therefore also serve to separate sections in a manner less definite than solid ending bar lines and to suggest *attacca*, an almost seamless continuation. In addition to these separating double bars, five more appear, of which two are less significant because they mark the end of the minuet and the trio, which typically call for double bars.<sup>36</sup> But this tally still leaves three other double bars, placed in the middle of movements, without key or meter changes. These double bars arguably provide the solution to the riddle, as we shall now see.

We note that Joachim's first idiosyncratic double bar separates a period from its varied repeat (Ex. 79). The second intriguing double bar appears shortly thereafter (Ex. 80, m. 8), and separates another theme from its varied, ornamented repeat.

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<sup>36</sup> Cooper, 468: the double bar "is justified [where] there is a da capo."

Gebunden, doch fast marschartig feierlich

[p] Naht sich verehrend

Innig  
Liebend  
aufblickend

Example 79, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Placement of Double Bars  
(mm. 1-12)

**In sanft belebter Bewegung**

**Example 80, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Placement of Double Bars  
(mm. 25-37)**

At first sight these two examples seem to underscore the double bar's function as a brief articulation before a varied repeat on scale degree vi (Ex. 79), and as marking a separation from an elegant ornamented variation of the opening in faster note values (Ex. 80). But the synchronization with tempo instructions invites another perspective on the notational device. Both double bars coincide with a different tempo instruction: in

the first case with “glancing up lovingly” (“Liebend aufblickend”), and in the second with “jumping up joyfully” (“freudig aufhüpfend”). Although for now we may term these words “tempo instructions,” they obviously instruct not tempo but something else – physical movements, to which we shall return.

If we take the two eight-measure periods before and after the double bars and consider the aligned tempo instructions, a sequence of pantomimic gestures emerges, a hint at a “narrative” – the myth of “Cupid and Psyche.” But this narrative is related not according to a text but rather according to stage movements or *Bewegungen*, which Joachim marked off with double bars just as he used double bars to “frame,” like a daguerreotype, the G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E mottos in *Abendglocken*, again revealing a predilection for *containing something*. While *Abendglocken* evoked, through the double bars, a parallel to early photography, the double bars in *Versuch* can be interpreted as revealing some kind of pantomime. The following diagram aligns the double bars of the *Versuch* with all the instructions marked in Joachim’s score, some related to tempo and others signifying gestures, or pantomimic *movements*.

Gebunden, doch fast marschartig feierlich				In sanft belebter Bewegung																			
m. 1		m. 9		m. 24		m. 32		m. 48															
Naht sich verehrend		Innig, Liebend aufblickend		dolce tanzt lieblich bewegt		freudig aufhüpfend		lusingando															
Menuetto. Allegro																							
m. 60		m. 68		m. 101		m. 114		m. 127		m. 144		m. 168		m. 172		m. 201							
		dolcissimo		lusingando		Kindlich andächtig				einschmeichelnd con anima				espressivo		teneramente		dolce		Menuetto da capo [al Fine]			
												fine											

Figure 11, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, “Movements” (“Bewegungen”)

The “tempo” instructions, as can be seen, are considerably diverse (Fig. 11).

While *dolce*, *dolcissimo*, and *innig* often appear in Joachim’s works, others are especially imaginative, expressive, and even descriptive. For a reader of the music unfamiliar with the melodramatic context of this composition – and the score nowhere points to the existence of Gisela’s melodrama or to the intended function of this piece – these instructions might seem highly unusual for a piano piece. While Joachim’s penchant for instructions abounding in pathos is demonstrated in many of his instrumental scores (often, in fact, not dissimilar to “Gebunden, doch fast marschartig feierlich”), his cues in *this* piece, such as “approaching reverently” (“naht sich verehrend”) or “jumping up joyfully” (“freudig aufhüpfend”) raise new questions. Also rare are instructions like *teneramente* and the evocative *lusingando*,<sup>37</sup> which, like the pantomimic instructions, all

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<sup>37</sup> Joachim’s choice of the Italian *lusingando* is rare in his oeuvre. It is defined as “coaxing,” “wheedling,” or “caressing”; it is the gerund of *lusingare*, “to flatter;” “Lusingando,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (accessed May 30, 2013). *Lusingando* appears in contemporary piano music, such as Carl Maria von Weber’s *Grand Duo Concertant* Op. 48, but, more important, in a work called “Aufforderung zum Tanze” Op. 65, J Verzeichnis 260, 1819 (Berlin, 1821).

point to the close connection of the score to the melodramatic project of Gisela von Arnim.<sup>38</sup>

If we take Joachim's manner of separating "tempo" instructions by double bars to mean *containing gestures*, we might see reflected in the music the composer's mind as he was contemplating Arnim's libretto. It becomes quite conceivable that the story presented in Joachim's piano score is that of Cupid and Psyche, not only because of the hints at a pantomime but also because of the linearity of the narrative, which emerges when we string together all the instructions of the score that relate to bodily movement. One could convincingly argue (see again in Fig. 11) that the main character Psyche is *approaching reverently, glancing up lovingly, and dancing sweetly and jumping up joyfully*. The sweet dance then continues throughout the sweet expression of *lusingando-dolcissimo-lusingando*, and finally comes to a close *devotionally and childlike*. Did Joachim take to heart Gisela's plot, which she sent him, as we have seen in Ch. 4, in a letter containing a summary of Cupid and Psyche? In this letter, we can now read that she pointed specifically to the "lamp scene," in which Psyche sees Cupid for the first time after approaching him with the lamp and joyfully recognizing that Cupid is not a monster, as an oracle and her sisters had tried to make her believe, but a god.

#### Gisela's "Libretto"

#### Joachim's "Tempo" Instructions

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<sup>38</sup> *Teneramente*, or "tenderly," is an instruction similar to *dolce* but with more emphasis.



The Story of “Cupid and Psyche” Told in a Letter to Joachim<sup>39</sup>

1) <i>She finally approaches with the lamp,</i> (Endlich nähert sie sich mit der Lampe,)	<i>Approaching reverently</i> (Naht sich verehrend)
2) She recognizes a God, who, by loving her, will lift her to higher realms, her joy exceeds all boundaries, she points upward, and so forth. (Sie erkennt einen Gott, indem der sie liebt, er wird sie aufwärts tragen, ihre Freude ihre Seligkeit übersteigen alle Grenzen, sie deutet empor, usf [sic]).	Intimate, glancing up lovingly (Innig, liebend aufblickend)
3) Then her joy transforms into childlike delight, she touches him, his wings, she wants to bend down to him. (Dann geht ihre Freude in kindliches Vergnügen über, sie betastet ihn, seine Flügel, sie will sich zu ihm beugen,)	Jumping up joyfully (Freudig aufhüpfend)
4) She returns with lose-hanging hair, accustomed to all horrors, slowly and in an elevated manner, and at the end hands over the vessel to Nero. (Sie kehrt mit herabhängenden Haaren, alle Schrecken gewöhnt, langsam und erhaben zurück, und überreicht zum Schluss den Becher dem Nero.)	Devotionally, mellifluously (Kindlich andächtig, einschmeichelnd)

**Figure 12, Textual/Musical Concordances between Joachim’s “Tempo” Instructions and the Psyche Plot in Gisela’s Libretto**

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<sup>39</sup> Hs-#10472a. The version of the story printed in her letter differs in small details from the printed version in Gisela von Arnim, *Das Herz der Laïs*, Drama in einem Akt. Für Signora Ristori geschrieben und ihr gewidmet (Bonn: Eduard Weber, 1857).

Figure 12 shows the tempo instructions of Joachim's score (right column) and the passages of Gisela's plot summary (left column) that overlap. Most likely Joachim used her summary sent to him in a letter rather than the published version of Gisela's play, but he may have drawn from both.<sup>40</sup>

Joachim's approach, no doubt, is reminiscent of *Abendglocken*, but in *Versuch eines Tanzes* the double bars frame whole sections and the textual layer of the "tempo instructions" strengthens the plot considerably (there is, of course, no comparable plot or narrative for *Abendglocken*). Gisela's unpublished letter, which she sent Joachim together with the plot, might explain, at least in part, Joachim's sectional approach to the plot as he composed his music. She gave him the following advice:

Herr Taglioni [a famous ballet master resident in Berlin at the time] says you must think of the action and *divide it into sections*—or for some subjects imitate the movements in ballet, the movements of Psyche (it can be a man in a ballet there are always those who understand that), as they stand here [in this letter] and divide them into measures.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> For the whole version of Gisela's letter and instructions to Joachim, see Appendix I and II; for a summary of the myth according to Apuleius, see Appendix III; for musical precedents on the "Cupid and Psyche" myth, Appendix IV; and for Gisela's published version of the play within the play, Appendix V.

<sup>41</sup> Hs-#10472a [my italics]. "Herr Taglioni sagt, du müßtest dir die Handlung denken und *sie in Takte theilen* — oder dir von irgendeinem Subject die *Bewegungen* am Ballet, die *Bewegungen* der Psyche (es kann ein Mann sein, bei einem Ballet sind immer welche die das verstehn) nachahmen lässt [?] wie sie hier [in diesem Brief] stehn,—und das *in Takte theilen*, —."

If we think of Gisela's plot, we can indeed, see that each of Joachim's separately notated tempo markings lines up not only with a passage from Gisela's version of the myth, but also more specifically, with a *Bewegung*, so that Joachim's cues seem precisely to fulfill what she had asked him to do in her letter. Furthermore, just as she recommended, Joachim presents in his score the "lamp scene," in which Psyche sees Cupid for the first time. "You will surely have to laugh but you can transfigure that in Psyche's happiness at viewing Amor—everything in art concerns transfiguration," Gisela advised him in the letter cited above.<sup>42</sup> Expressing a plot through *Bewegungen* is noteworthy because it requires a very subtle approach: Joachim, as we shall see below, did not weight the music with descriptive meaning and did not "load" the motives with reminiscent powers, as is the case in the Wagnerian leitmotif, nor did Joachim use noisy effects such as tremoli to rehash certain stock figures. And he also did not partake in melodramatic techniques such as sequential alternation, a stereotypical melodramatic technique applied in Liszt's and Schumann's melodramatic piano ballades. In the latter genre music and text often alternate and thereby create a continuum, that is, music "gains its significance" through what has been said.<sup>43</sup> Nor did Joachim do what

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid. "Du wirst zwar lachen müssen doch kannst du das ja in die *Seligkeit der Psyche beim Erblicken Amors* verklären – es beruht doch alles in der Kunst auf Verklärung."

<sup>43</sup> Waeber, 235: "La musique gagne sa signification grâce à ce qui est dit."

composers of the *ballet d'action* scores did – which, as in the above-mentioned melodramas, could “depict” and “imitate” action,<sup>44</sup> provide “counterpoints” to the action on stage,<sup>45</sup> and musically describe “depth of character focusing the spectator’s attention on a particular character just as a modern cinematic close-up would.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, Joachim’s music stays somewhat aloof from the programmatic presentation of the myth. (Why that might be we shall consider below.)

Furthermore, while the clearly suggested sectional structure in the score is emblematic of melodrama and the *ballet d'action*, the “tempo” instructions are rather uncommon, so clearly written by a performer who presumably had had, at the time of composition, no exposure to music, either for the genre of pantomime-ballet or for concert melodrama, but was depending mostly on Gisela’s help. Perhaps the tempo instructions represent cues for the dancer, who would then look to Gisela’s play for the rest of the occasionally very long lines of some of Psyche’s entries? That they indicate gestures and not tempo seems beyond doubt. But since the work was left uncompleted, Joachim’s “tempo instructions” pose questions. Perhaps they represent the beginnings of creating an “annotated score,” which, however, would have included much more

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<sup>44</sup> Nye, 193.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 194.

information. Surviving annotated scores of the *ballet d'action*, with which Joachim's *Versuch* might share some features, would have included four levels of instructions written "between the staves of almost every page" with enough room between each annotation, as recent scholarship suggested<sup>47</sup> – annotations concerning a) stage instructions regarding the entrances and exits of characters; b) indications of their gestures and movements; c) indications of the characters' intentions (Nye mentions threats, refusals, orders, desires); and d) emotional or psychological affect (Nye mentions fear, despair, pity, anguish).<sup>48</sup>

In comparison to an annotated score such as that of *Jason et Médée* choreographed by Noverre with music by Jean-Joseph Rodolphe (1763), it is conceivable that Joachim's score, had it been completed as an "annotated score," would have been revised, synchronized, complemented with the addition of minute or other precise cues for Gisela's *whole* pantomimic action (and not the minimal action evident in Figure 11, and perhaps clarified with regard to the performative meaning of the double bars and fermatas. The question remains: In which aesthetic and tradition would this

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>48</sup> "Placed between the staves on almost every page." However, "there is plenty of space between each annotation, suggesting that each is placed specifically where it corresponds to the music." See Nye, 195.

collaborative effort have asserted itself? In Joachim's music, in short, the music does not speak as clearly as the "tempo" instructions do.

## ***5.2 Reconstructing an Older Tradition: Joachim's/Arnim's Melodrama Sketch in the Context of the Ballet-Pantomime***

If the style of Joachim's supposed melodramatic music with its "gestures" and double bars is untypical, its idiosyncrasies could be related, at least in part, as we showed in the comparison to Gisela's text, to her text. Gisela, in any case, seems to have had specific expectations regarding the nature and function of the music. As we shall continue to argue, not only the idiosyncrasies of Joachim's score but also its musical syntax strongly suggest that two artists with different attitudes were working on this melodrama project, apprehending the same melodramatic scene in considerably diverging ways – Gisela from a literary and pantomime tradition, Joachim more from a classical music tradition, which, however, appeared to elicit signs of "adaptation" according to her wishes. Although the final synchronization of music, text, and pantomime in the score was postponed until later (and never realized), it is intriguing to examine where Gisela's play and Joachim's music hint at the same genre or tradition and where they avoid working with the potential implicit in the melodramatic style.

Two examples in Gisela and Joachim's melodramatic pantomime scene (hereinafter "Cupid and Psyche pantomime") show hints pointing to existing

melodramatic practices, or at least a significant potential for these, through which we can better understand and appreciate what Arnim's/Joachim's collaboration of dance, music, and words means in a larger cultural context. That the music's avoidance of certain melodramatic techniques can imply meaning will also become apparent.

On the one hand, the Cupid and Psyche pantomime reveals significant traces of the eighteenth-century genre *ballet d'action*, which recently has been described as "a translation of works from different literary, theatrical, or mythological genres into the language of mime and dance," and which was intricately involved with the music for it.<sup>49</sup> By the 1850s, of course, this eighteenth-century art form, defined by Jean-Georges Noverre (1727-1810) and Gasparo Angiolini (1731-1803), had acquired a different face. Gisela von Arnim, who worked closely with ballet master Paul Taglioni (1808-1884),<sup>50</sup> therefore drew on the influence of *ballet d'action*, or what it had become by the mid-nineteenth century in a particular circle of Berlin. The Taglioni dynasty, in fact, had a forceful impact on the romantic ballet aesthetic, changing it significantly toward a

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<sup>49</sup> Nye, 2.

<sup>50</sup> See letter Hs-#10472A, from Gisela to Joachim (Freies Deutsches Hochstift), which speaks of her visit to Paul Taglioni, who was, since 1849, ballet master of the *Königliche Oper*, Berlin. Paul was the brother of Marie Taglioni (1804-1884). The latter made a great impact on romantic ballet, according to John Michael Cooper: "[She] danced on the tips of her toes with a seemingly supernatural grace – and the efforts of composers [...] accommodate[d] this style." See John Michael Cooper, *Historical Dictionary of Romantic Music* (Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 45-46.

stronger narrative, a less decorative and more pantomimic aesthetic,<sup>51</sup> and an emphasis on “tailor-made” music composed in close collaboration with the choreographer in the service of the dramatic goal of the whole work.<sup>52</sup> Paul and Marie’s (the elder) achievements thus exactly aligned with the aesthetic guidelines of the *ballet d’action*. As we shall investigate below, Gisela’s explicit use of *pantomime* – as opposed to formal and figure-heavy ballet or *Tanz* – had much to do with Paul Taglioni. In one of Gisela’s visits to Paul Taglioni, she specifically sought advice about the Cupid and Psyche pantomime.

On the other hand, we can view in the large-scale dramatic structure of the play within the play a potential for differentiated dramatic and musical treatment of the two realities implied by the two separate narrative planes of the play and the play within, such as in Mendelssohn’s “Pyramus and Thisbe” from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* Op.

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<sup>51</sup> Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller, “Zum ersten Mahle: Ein neues anacreontisches Divertissement,” in *Souvenirs de Taglioni. Materialien des Derra de Moroda Dance Archives*, ed. Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller (München: Kieser, 2007), I:54. In a review of one of Taglioni’s choreographies he was praised with the following words: “Hr. Taglioni wusste die reizende Fabel der pantomimischen Behandlung so geschickt anzupassen, dass er die höchste Wirkung dadurch hervorbrachte. Als vorzüglich gelungen, ja wir möchten sagen, als wahrhaft meisterlich, erscheint in dieser Hinsicht der dritte Act des Ballettes, welcher durchaus pantomimisch (das heisst, ohne geringste Einmischung des Tanzes) gehalten ist. Hr. Taglioni hat hier sogar gewagt, eine Erzählung pantomimisch vortragen zu lassen, welche durch ihre Klarheit und ihr Feuer wirklich Bewunderung verdient.”

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., I:53-54: already in 1821 Taglioni had commissioned his own music for a ballet. “Taglioni stellte hier schon unter Beweis, dass er eigenständig zu arbeiten verstand. Zum einen liess er neue Musik komponieren (von Umlauff und Gyrowetz).”



61. That Gisela and Joachim did not, however, realize this dramatic potential in the Cupid and Psyche pantomime – although Joachim certainly knew Mendelssohn’s stage work and its play within the play – will become obvious from the analysis and interpretation below, and will support the argument that Joachim in some sense “resisted” the aesthetic of the melodrama.

Gisela does not explicitly mention any dance, melodrama, or literary models on which she relied for her play and the pantomime scene. All that survives of the primary source materials is her play and her significant letter of instructions to Joachim (see Appendix I). She was evidently keen to revive an ancient Roman conception of pantomime<sup>53</sup> – not surprising for a young writer growing up in Berlin in the 1840s and 50s.<sup>54</sup> Also telling is her attraction to the genre of a one-act tragedy, in which her

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<sup>53</sup> If we consider the definition of pantomime as a “dramatic entertainment in which gesture alone was used to convey the action, usually to the accompaniment of music,” it becomes apparent that our Cupid and Psyche pantomime does not adhere to the standard definition as “mute” art, which works through gestures alone, but rather, to a concept resembling that prevalent in ancient Rome, where pantomime “consisted of dance, music and [spoken] words,” that is, a melodramatic aesthetic. But given how few words are involved in Psyche’s pantomime, it makes sense to see it as a hybrid drawing heavily on the eighteenth-century *ballet d’action* in which the pantomimic action is essential to the plot. Jane Bellingham, “Pantomime,” in *The Oxford Companion to Music. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e4965> (accessed June 30, 2013); “In 18th-century England, France, and Vienna the name ‘pantomime’ was given to a lighthearted entertainment, similar to an intermezzo, that included instrumental music, dance, song, and spectacle; the subject matter was usually mythological [...]” Also see Yana Zarifi, “Chorus and Dance in the Ancient World,” in Marianne McDonald, J. Michael Walton, eds., *Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 243-245.

pantomime scene unfolds in the middle; in this pantomime the central character is a female mythological figure (Psyche).<sup>55</sup> As one scholar has pointed out, it was customary for the tradition of monodrama, an early German form of melodrama with one main actress,<sup>56</sup> to evoke a scene or an act of tragedy.<sup>57</sup> It was also common in the *ballet d'action*; so, both genres could have influenced Gisela. After the *Sturm und Drang* period many pantomimic, musical, and melodramatic works (monodramas<sup>58</sup> and duodramas,

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<sup>54</sup> Indeed, as one scholar asserts: "Especially during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm III and IV Berlin experienced a neoclassical transformation in which the city's buildings and public spaces remade Berlin into the Athens of the north"; Eric Schneeman, "The Berlin Performances of Christoph Gluck's *Alceste* during the 1848 Revolution," 3 (paper given at American Musicological Society-Southwest Chapter, spring 2013; text retrieved from <http://ams-sw.org>). That there was a veritable Gluck renaissance in Berlin is reported by Berlioz, but it also becomes clear in Joachim's and Gisela's letters, and might have contributed to the revival of not only pantomime but also a fascination with ancient culture at large.

<sup>55</sup> Ulrich Kühn, *Sprech-Ton-Kunst. Musikalisches Sprechen und Formen des Melodrams im Schauspiel- und Musiktheater (1770-1933)*, in *Theatron* vol. 35 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001), 122.

<sup>56</sup> Anne Dhu McLucas, "Monodrama," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18976> (accessed April 22, 2014).

<sup>57</sup> Kühn, 126. It was not necessarily tragedy in a strict sense that was conducive to melodramatic and pantomimic treatments but rather "tragic and violent love stories." See "Ancient Pantomime and the Rise of Ballet," in *New Directions in Ancient Pantomime*, ed. Edith Hall and Rosie Wyles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 371. Not surprisingly, one of the most popular texts for setting melodrama or melodramatic scenes was Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which provided a "prototypical starting point for the monodramatic scenario" (see Kühn, 122).

including some of the works of the significant melodramatic composer Jiri Antonín Benda [1722-1795]), were based on similar short tragedies,<sup>59</sup> featuring female mythological figures and usually presenting the act in which the catastrophe occurs.

That genres like the ballet-pantomime found especially fertile ground in the decades leading to mid-nineteenth-century Berlin, the city that earned, during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, the nickname “Athens of the north,” is again not surprising. Gisela von Arnim was exposed to many plays and ballets reviving the ancient classics.

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<sup>58</sup> “In its narrow meaning, a form of Melodrama that features one character, sometimes with chorus, using speech in alternation with short passages of music, or sometimes speaking over music. Simultaneously with melodrama, the initial enthusiasm for monodrama occurred in Germany chiefly during the 1770s and 80s, and the two terms are often used interchangeably, since many of the early melodramas had only one character on stage at a time. The prototypical ‘monodrama’, Rousseau’s *Pygmalion*, actually has two characters, but until the end, when Galatea comes to life and speaks four lines, Pygmalion holds the stage alone. Introduced in Weimar by Goethe in 1772, with music by Anton Schweitzer, *Pygmalion* became the model for several examples of monodrama and duodrama produced in Weimar and Gotha by J. C. Brandes, often as a vehicle for his wife Charlotte, and in Weimar, Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt by the Seylers. From 1775 to 1790 over 30 so-called monodramas were performed in Germany, though some of these are actually cantatas with one main character.” Anne Dhu McLucas, “Monodrama.” Also see Ulrich Kühn, *Sprech-Ton-Kunst*, 125.

<sup>59</sup> They were also called “Kurztragödie.” Benda’s *Ariadne* in the French adaptation of J. B. Du Bois, as Waeber mentions (*En Musique dans le Texte: Le Mélodrame, de Rousseau à Schoenberg*, 203-204), was attractive for Du Bois as melodrama of an extreme tension (“tension extreme”), not least because of its dramatic structure of “Kurztragödie” as opposed to “Tragödie.”

She drew significant inspiration from a ballet-pantomime rendition of Gluck's *Orpheus*, which she had heard in Berlin around 1854.<sup>60</sup>

Gisela's and Joachim's Cupid and Psyche pantomime seems to have been designed with a balance between pantomime, music, and speech. Psyche's pantomime and the music are, as it turns out, more important than the spoken declamation, which is merely provided by the supporting actors (not by the dancer) explicating the plot outlined by the pantomime as they observe; Gisela's scene, thus, can be described as a melodramatic hybrid, or a *ballet d'action* complemented with some spoken text.<sup>61</sup> Both melodrama and the *ballet d'action* are characterized by emotional excess – albeit of a slightly different sort, given that one genre by strict definition includes spoken text, while the other does not. In particular, the *ballet d'action* prioritizes close interaction between the music and the dramatic action, wherein it differs from ballet, which used preexisting music and popular tunes as opposed to “tailor-made” music composed to fit the narrative.<sup>62</sup> By design, the pantomime in the tradition of Noverre did not fulfill a

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<sup>60</sup> Dramaliewa, “Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen,” 54. But it is likely that the mere exposure in the fall of 1855 to Ristori, who played Alfieri's *Myrrha* on the *Berliner Schauspielbühne*, inspired Gisela to write a pantomimic work. See Mey, *Ich gleiche einem Stern um Mitternacht*, 88.

<sup>61</sup> Nye, 206. In the *ballet d'action* there was commonly no spoken text, just dance/mime and music.

decorative function as in earlier eighteenth-century French ballet<sup>63</sup> but aimed to express passions and the “fluctuation of sentiments” (“la fluctuation des sentiments”), as represented, for example, in Gluck’s *Orpheus ed Euridice*.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, while Noverre viewed the *ballet d’action* as a dramatic art encompassing elements of dance, ballet, and pantomime, the art differed distinctly from ballet, which, in its stereotypical type, endorsed form and figures,<sup>65</sup> and relied on mostly pre-existing music<sup>66</sup> and popular tunes instead of music composed by a composer in collaboration with the choreographer in the service of the larger dramatic goal.<sup>67</sup> While there is little evidence about “exactly

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<sup>62</sup> John Michael Cooper, *Historical Dictionary of Romantic Music* (Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 45-46.

<sup>63</sup> Jacques Van der Veen, *Le Mélodrame musical de Rousseau au romantisme: Ses Aspects historiques et stylistiques* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 55.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>65</sup> As Noverre explained in his preface to *Euthyme et Eucharis*: “Dance is the Art of steps, of graceful movements and of lovely positions. Ballet, which borrows a part of its charms from Dance, is the Art of Design, of forms and of figures. Pantomime is purely that of feeling and of the emotions of the Soul expressed through gestures.” See Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell, “Noverre, Jean-Georges,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*.

<sup>66</sup> “While Noverre urged composers to create forward-looking descriptive music, he detested the practice of fitting choreography to pre-composed music; for Angiolini, who was also a composer, the music dictated to the dance.” See Hansell, “Noverre, Jean-Georges,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*.

how [*ballet d'action*] was performed," we know that it "was an intensely visual, physical art [...] [and] prioritized 'expression' and 'meaning' over and above technique."<sup>68</sup>

The excess of emotion is inherently part of melodramatic mythological one-act tragedies as well as of the *ballet d'action*. In the former the highest point of passion was often evoked by "excessive extension"<sup>69</sup> of a monologue, in which the pantomime appeared at a critical moment – the melodramatic style "bursting" into pantomime – to express a level of intensity for which the words of the monologue could no longer account: "When passion has reached such an intensity that words no longer suffice, the declamation must be broken off and the violent emotion expressed pantomimically to the accompaniment of expressive music."<sup>70</sup> In other words: "Monologue ignites from inner complexities that press for expression; expressive pantomime interrupts it at about the point when external action or moments of inner arousal surpass the power of

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<sup>67</sup> Nye, 193: "As both Noverre and Angiolini point out, the choreographer and the composer are both 'slaves' to the dramatic subject of the *ballet d'action* because dramatic unity is the overriding ambition." According to Nye (193, fn. 30), Angiolini "thinks of music as the 'slave'" of dance in *Lettere di Gasparo Angiolini a Monsieur Noverre*, 75n. This led to many choreographers having one specific composer with whom they closely collaborated. Paul Taglioni, for example, collaborated intensely with dance music composer Peter Ludwig Hertel (1817-1899).

<sup>68</sup> Nye, 3.

<sup>69</sup> Kühn, 126.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 128; he cites Kirsten Gram Holmstroem (1967), 40.

formulation of verbal speech. That means, as the supporting text verifies, a highly differentiated gestural/pantomimic play that comes close to the principles of Noverre's *ballet d'action*."<sup>71</sup> In the *ballet d'action* as a self-contained genre, however, these moments of highest intensity worked in similar ways except that they did not have words from which to burst into pantomime but often used silence within the music – as opposed to silence of words – as an expression of emotional excess.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, that music could or should stop at the most dramatic points was often specified by choreographers of *ballet d'action*, and by Gisela, as we shall see. The annotated score of such works typically revealed this goal through the use of fermatas and other pauses. Although Arnim's

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<sup>71</sup> "Monolog entzündet sich an inneren Komplexionen, die zur Expression drängen; expressive Pantomime unterbricht ihn, etwa dann, wenn äußere Handlungs- oder innere Erregungsmomente die verbalsprachliche Formulierungskraft überfordern. Gedacht ist, wie der Nebentext belegt, an hoch differenziertes gestisch-pantomimisches Spiel, das Prinzipien des Noverreschen *Ballet d'action* nahekommt." Kühn 122, he cites Van der Veen, *Le Mélodrame musical de Rousseau au romantisme: Ses Aspects historiques et stylistiques*: "If Noverre has led many German composers to invent ballet music of a style much approaching melodrama, he has not exaggerated his influence on the latter genre" ("Comme Noverre a amené plusieurs compositeurs allemands à croire des musiques de ballet d'un style qui se rapproche beaucoup de celui du mélodrame, il n'est pas exagéré son influence sur ce dernier genre"). Also see Hansell, "Noverre, Jean-Georges," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*: "Apart from a uniquely French disapproval of his insistence on producing independent ballets in preference to dances complementing an opera, criticism centred on the works themselves: his chosen themes were thought unsuited to representation in dance, and his lengthy productions neglecting pure dance for pantomime were often found enigmatic. [...]. It was Noverre's *Lettres sur la danse* which focussed attention on the function of theatrical dance. [...]" See Hansell, "Noverre, Jean-Georges," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*.

<sup>72</sup> Nye, 206.

Cupid and Psyche pantomime does use some spoken words – and only one character dances, unlike in the typical *ballet d'action*<sup>73</sup> – it appears to share much with the *ballet d'action* in the tradition of Noverre.

	First Scene	Second Scene	Third Scene	End
<i>Das Herz der Laiis:</i>	.....			
	★ ★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★	★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★
			x	
			-----	
... = The main theatrical play (drama)				
★ = Supporting actors Nero, House master, and Slave				
x = Pantomime of "Cupid and Psyche," play-within-the-play				
--- = Joachim's music				

**Figure 13, G. von Arnim, *Das Herz der Laiis*, (Melo)drama Structure**

Gisela's pantomime (Figure 13) was conceived to unfold in a three-layered section in which Joachim's music, the dancer's pantomime, and the *spoken text* by the three main actors (who tell the myth of Cupid and Psyche) overlap. The music would provide the first layer, while the pantomime and the spoken declamation would provide two more layers: The story of the myth was split up between silent stage instructions for the actress's pantomime (the second layer) and text spoken by the other actors (the third layer). Of the last two, the silent layer was much more essential, as the dancer had – during her pantomime – almost no spoken text.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 40, "The *ballet d'action* was never solo, except in the case of the mime equivalent of a soliloquy. Productions often involved a large cast."



Without the pantomime, the plot misses one of the three layers, concealed in the stage instructions, which a *viewer* of the play does not hear but only *sees* in the actress's gestures. This two-fold division of the text into gestures and spoken declamation was mentioned in one of the earliest reviews of the play, where the reviewer (who read but did not see Gisela's play) took issue with this approach and complained that the myth was divided into bits and pieces, which the reviewer had to collect and reconstruct in order to understand fully.<sup>74</sup>

Gisela appears to have been aware of the intensely dramatic role pantomime would play in her "Cupid and Psyche" scene – the pantomime commences at a point of inner agitation when words no longer suffice. Overwhelmed by emotion, Laïs, the main character in Gisela's outer story, breaks into pantomime and, embodying the female mythological figure Psyche, presents the myth of Cupid and Psyche. *Das Herz der Laïs* is set at the court of the ancient Roman emperor Nero. Laïs is a dancer and Nero's servant. The play features three supporting actors whose lines move the story forward: Nero, a slave, and a housekeeper. Laïs has a heart condition – her heart is "too big," preventing

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<sup>74</sup> The reviewer noted that the story can be constructed "[in part from] the instructions of the poet for the [pantomime] actress, [and] in part from the words of the emperor who looks on, [as well as] of his house master and Laïs herself, who a few times speaks in intervening asides" ("[theils aus] den Anweisungen der Dichterin für die [pantomimische] Darstellerin, [und] theils aus den Worten des zuschauenden Kaisers, [sowie] seines Hausmeisters und der Laïs selbst, die ein Paar mal für sich zwischenein spricht"). L. Seeger, review of *Dramatische Werke, in 2 Vols.*, by Gisela von Arnim (Bonn, 1858). *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* 39 (September 26, 1858): 932.

her from dancing. The main story line depicts Laïs as she tries to persuade Nero to free the slave, who has fallen into disgrace because he broke a vase. In her magnanimity ("Großmüthigkeit") and compassion, Laïs finally performs a pantomimic dance and wins the emperor's heart, thereby convincing him to free the slave. But while Laïs gets what she wished – the release of the slave – she sacrifices her own life, for her weak heart does not survive the intensely passionate dance. Before Laïs/Psyche breaks into dance, the plot reaches its height of intensity: Laïs cannot stand by and watch the cruel emperor take the life of the slave, but at the same time she knows that by dancing for Nero – the only way to persuade him to spare the slave – she will sacrifice her own life. This conflict between her compassion and the reality of her heart condition supplies the "hamartia" or "tragic flaw," which brings about Laïs's death.

But by itself the Cupid and Psyche scene does not capture the emotional excess evident from the drama's "bursting" into pantomime, which Gisela imagined would be staged by Adelaide Ristori, to whom the play is dedicated, and accompanied by Joachim's expressive music. Gisela seems to have imagined and expected that Joachim's music would capture moments of high inner agitation within the "Cupid and Psyche" scene. But did Joachim account for these moments of inner agitation? What would his music's role be, anyway, when spoken declamation, at the peak of dramatic intensity, yielded to pantomime?

### 5.3 Continuous vs. Non-continuous Music in Joachim's Versuch eines Tanzes

In a striking undated letter that throws perhaps some light on Joachim's challenge of writing melodramatic music, Gisela specified two points. First, the Cupid and Psyche scene was "to be sure not a dance but a pantomime" ("ist ja kein Tanz sondern Pantomime"). Second, elaborating on this distinction, she added: "It is to be sure not a dance but pantomime, only if you are not opposed to music at momentary movements" ("Es ist ja kein Tanz sondern Pantomime, wenn dir Musik nur an momentanen Bewegungen nicht widerstrebt").<sup>75</sup> What did she mean by "momentane Bewegungen"? And what was at stake when she emphasized the distinctions not only between genres but between continuous and non-continuous music?<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Hs-#10472a, 5.

<sup>76</sup> As she also wrote to Joachim, Gisela was in contact with Taglioni, a leading ballet master of her time, who lived in Berlin but whose choreographies dominated the stages of Berlin, Vienna and Milan, and who helped transform German ballet from its earlier decorative function toward a modern, expressive and "diverse" ["abwechslungsreich"] style, to "an independent speech of movement which, with its depiction of ancient pantomime before the eyes, was considered a gestural mime" ("eigene Bewegungssprache [...], die, mit der Vorstellung einer antiken Pantomime vor Augen, gestisch-mimisch gehalten war"). The newer type included an emphasis on fantastic elements and on one-act scenarios, most famously manifested in Taglioni's *Satanella oder Metamorphosen* (1852) with music by Peter Ludwig Hertel (See Oberzaucher-Schüller, "'Immer Künstler, nie Handwerker...': Zu Paul Taglioni's Schaffen," in *Souvenirs de Taglioni*. Also see Manuela Jahrmärker, "Biographische Spuren einer europäischen Legende," in *Souvenirs de Taglioni*, I:177.

Returning to the dichotomy between the *ballet d'action* versus the old tradition of ballet (as had been practiced at the seventeenth-century court of Louis XIV), Gisela's specifications seem to have accorded with Noverre's dance reforms, which she felt were worth emphasizing to Joachim. As we have discussed above, as the "rehabilitation of the art of pantomime in the womb of choreographic language, Noverre's reform aimed at restoring the letters of nobility ["lettres de noblesse"] of dance by ridding it of its decorative aspect."<sup>77</sup> This meant that music had to be composed specifically for a *ballet d'action*,<sup>78</sup> that it had to serve a larger dramatic aim, and that it presumably should "support" the narrative in some way or another.<sup>79</sup>

One reason why Gisela clarified for Joachim the distinction between the two genres presumably had to do with how she envisioned his music, as is plainly evident from her line "wenn Dir Musik nur an momentanen Bewegungen nicht widerstrebt." She was likely seeking to foster a dramatic interaction between pantomime and music in which music would *not* sound continuously, provided that Joachim consented. Instead,

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<sup>77</sup> "Réhabilitation de l'art de la pantomime au sein du langage choréographique, la réforme de Noverre vise à redonner à la danse ses lettres de noblesse en la débarrassant de son aspect décoratif." Waeber, 191.[my translation]

<sup>78</sup> Composers writing ballet-pantomime music for Paul Taglioni included, for example, Holger Simon Paulli, Edvard Helsted, Niels Gade, Johannes Frederik Fröhlich, and Peter Ludwig Hertel. See Irene Holzer, "August Bournonville" in *Souvenirs de Taglioni*, I:169.

<sup>79</sup> Nye, 195, argues regarding the function of music that "usually, the music parallels the sense of the annotation, supporting, clarifying, and intensifying it."<sup>79</sup>

music would sound at some “gestures” (“Bewegungen”) but remain silent at others. In the published version of her drama *Das Herz der Laïs* she expanded on the notion of rests and pauses: “Note: the music accompanies Psyche – only three or four times does the music stop at the best chosen passages. A pause, in which Laïs [Psyche] clutches her heart, and then, overcoming herself and looking up as if blessed, dances again; the music stops.”<sup>80</sup> It is Laïs’s heart condition that proves fatal. Because Laïs is overwhelmed by compassion, she resumes dancing despite the risk, all in order to convince Nero to free the slave. Tellingly, Gisela specifies that the music should stop at this pregnant moment – when “Laïs touches her heart.”<sup>81</sup>

Gisela appears here to suggest not only alternating music and text, a technique used in many melodramas of the time (including “concert melodramas”<sup>82</sup> such as the melodramatic ballades by Schumann and Liszt<sup>83</sup>) but also a technique, specifically

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<sup>80</sup> “Anmerkung: Die Musik [...] begleitet die Psyche, - nur drei oder vier mal stockt sie an den bestgewählten Stellen. Eine Pause, in welcher Laïs [Psyche] an ihr Herz fasst, - und dann mit einer Überwindung, die selig emporschaut, weiter tanzt; [...] Die Musik schließt.” Arnim, *Das Herz der Laïs*, 320.

<sup>81</sup> “Laïs [fasst] an ihr Herz.”

<sup>82</sup> Waeber, 247: “Dès fin du XVIIIe siècle, le melodrama, genre par essence scénique, allait rapidement s’aventurer hors de la scène théâtrale sans pour autant que sa théâtralité en fût effacée. Née à l’aube du romantisme, la ballade mélodramatique est l’exemple le plus abouti de ce mélodrame sans scène, mais qui tire paradoxalement son indéniable puissance théâtrale de cette absence de scène. [...]. On parle souvent de “mélodrame de concert.”

effective in the *ballet d'action*, where it served the expression of a particularly poignant moment, as when, in the *ballet d'action*, music “bursts” into silence (comparable to a melodramatic one-act tragedy) “bursting” for the lack of words into pantomime). Perhaps Gisela knew the *ballet d'action* *Psyché*, choreographed by Pierre Gardel to a score by Ernest Müller? It also falls silent – the music stops – at a moment of high intensity: “The music stops as *Psyché* is snatched from certain death by Zephyr.”<sup>84</sup>

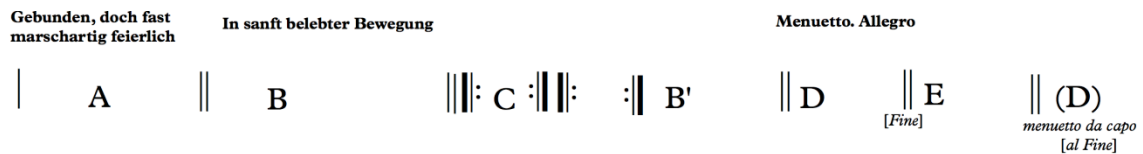
That Joachim did not pursue such text-music relationships is evident from the lack of recognizable musical topoi in his stylistic vocabulary, which were, indeed, an important part of the melodrama aesthetic in both the stage and concert melodrama as well as in the *ballet d'action*. One also searches in vain in Joachim’s music for the use of effects or the creation of an ambient atmosphere. As we shall now investigate, however, his work does show “three or four” opportunities for interrupting the music (“at the

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<sup>83</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century, a melodramatic subgenre developed – the concert melodrama – in which the “scenic” [scénique] aspect was exchanged for a “concentration on the voice.” Among the most celebrated examples were the melodramas – or piano ballades – by Liszt, Schumann, and Max von Schilling. The melodramatic ballade was a hybrid of two romantic traditions, that of the sung German ballade (“a participant in the universe of the *Lied*”) and the large category of “recitation with music,” to which Schubert’s *Abschied von der Erde* belongs. See Waeber, 248.

<sup>84</sup> Nye, 206, cites *Psyché*, choreography Pierre Gardel, music Ernest Müller (first performed in Paris in 1790), sixteen-part manuscript orchestral score (Lyon, Archives municipales, 74WP 118), 23.

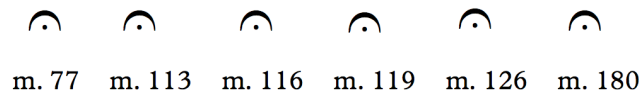
best-chosen places”), presumably in order to acknowledge Gisela’s instructions: “Wenn Dir Musik nur an momentanen Bewegungen nicht widerstrebt.”



**Figure 14, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Overall Form**

The three movements of the *Vesuch* begin with an introductory section in D major (A), which evokes through its meter and dotted rhythms a march. Following this short movement are two ternary movements (BCB’ and DED), both dancelike and lighthearted, in moderate tempi. The harmonic scheme of the two ternary forms centers on G major and B-flat major, respectively, while the inner, “trio,” movements visit the relative minor keys: section C is in E minor while section E is in G minor.

Earlier we discussed how Joachim’s double bars sometimes signal something other than changes in key and meter but rather serve to frame “gestures” (“Bewegungen”), which align with Gisela’s plot of the myth. In addition, the double bar was recognized, as an articulation sign for a performer, where one could presumably take time. Joachim’s *Versuch eines Tanzes* reveals several double bars (mm. 8, 24, 32, 60, 68, 81, 113, 144 and 201) that align with cadences and allow the performer to articulate a pause. In addition, another notational element suggesting pauses appears with some frequency: the fermata.



**Figure 15, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Fermatas**

With one exception (m. 113), the fermatas do not align with the double bars and hence could have offered additional opportunities for the performer to accommodate Gisela’s preference for interrupting the music during moments of heightened dramatic intensity. As we do not know how the music would have lined up with the text or the pantomime, we can only speculate about how well Joachim’s music accorded with Gisela’s conception of melodrama. Yet another characteristic of the *Versuch* relates to Gisela’s instructions that the music for her pantomime “ist ja kein Ballett sondern Pantomime.” Joachim’s formal architecture relies on a periodic (four-square) syntax, which evokes dance or ballet music, often defined by musical parameters of regular, symmetrical phrases and periods as well as usually simple two-voice textures, “catchy” themes, and reliance on repetition and variation.<sup>85</sup>

First movement	Second movement	Third movement
D major	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div>B   G major</div> <div>C   e minor</div> <div>B'   G major</div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;"> <div>D   B-flat major</div> <div>E   g minor</div> <div>D   B-flat major</div> </div>

**Figure 16, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Formal Structure**

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<sup>85</sup> Marian E. Smith, “French Nineteenth-Century Ballet” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ballet*, ed. Marion Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 142.



Joachim pours into this double ternary form music that observes a strictly “quadratische Syntax,”<sup>86</sup> (four-square periodicity) as Figures 17 und 18 illustrate. The first movement opens with a period of eight measures, underlining a standard I-V-I harmonic pattern in D major (the antecedent ending on the tonic), while the second group opens on the relative minor, B minor, and moves, in the course of the antecedent, to the mediant F-sharp major, and the consequent returns to the dominant, A major. The last group of eight measures is an identical repetition of the first.

<p><b>1st movement: Gebunden doch fast marschartig feierlich</b></p> <p>4 measures antecedent + 4 measures consequent (Period) = <i>a</i>  4+4 (varied repetition)=<i>a'</i>  4+4 (period, as beginning)=<i>a</i></p> <p><i>Phrase construction: a a' a</i></p>
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**Figure 17, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Phrase Construction, First Movement**

The second movement presents some irregularities, especially in the framing B and B' sections, which extend over two long, spun-out phrases of sixteen and twenty measures, respectively.

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<sup>86</sup> Dahlhaus, “Liszt’s Bergsymphonie und die Idee der Symphonischen Dichtung,” 108.

<p><b>2nd movement: In sanft belebter Bewegung</b></p> <p><b>B</b></p> <p>4 measures antecedent (<i>a</i>) + 4 measures consequent (<i>b</i>)</p> <p>4 measures varied repeat of <i>a</i> + 16 measures spun-out variation of <i>b=a'b'</i></p> <p>4 + 4 (as in the beginning) <i>ab</i></p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>4 measures i-V (<i>a</i>) + 4 measures repeat V-iv-i (<i>b</i>)</p> <p>4 measures I-V (sequence of <i>a</i>) + 5 measures varied repeat I-VII</p> <p>4 measures V-iv-i (<i>b</i>)</p> <p><b>B'</b></p> <p>4 measures antecedent (<i>a</i>) + 4 measures consequent (<i>b</i>)</p> <p>4 measures varied repeat of <i>a</i> + 20 measures spun-out variation of <i>b=a'b'</i></p>
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**Figure 18, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Phrase Construction, Second Movement**

In the third movement a periodic syntax again prevails with few exceptions, while the melodic material is diverse and introduces new thematic material.

<p><b>3rd movement: Menuetto. Allegretto</b></p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>6 (3+3) presentation <i>aa</i> + 7 (3 +4) continuation <i>ab</i></p> <p>7 measures + 7 measures repeat new material <i>c</i></p> <p>4 measures epilogue</p> <p><b>D</b></p> <p>4 measures <i>a</i> (i-V) + 4 measures <i>b</i> (i-VI)</p> <p>4 measures continuation <i>c</i> + 4 measures repeat <i>c</i></p> <p>4 measures <i>a</i> + 8 measures <i>b'</i></p> <p>4 measures <i>c'</i> + 4 continuation</p> <p>4 measures <i>a</i> + 9 measures</p> <p>2 measures <i>a'</i>+ 2 measures <i>a'</i> + 3 measures epilogue</p> <p><i>menuetto da capo [al Fine]</i></p>
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**Figure 19, Joachim, *Versuch eines Tanzes*, Phrase Construction, Third Movement**

Not only the regularity of phrases but also the relative simplicity and transparency of texture embolden us to argue that Joachim's *Tanz*, as its very title suggests, is indeed a dance, a ballet-like dance, and contains music written *for* a dance

rather than for a pantomime. If we return to the possible influence that the *ballet d'action* – even in its romantic incarnation – might have had on Gisela's dramatic conception, the questions "What is dance? What is mime?" inevitably come up.<sup>87</sup> As to mime, to which at least Gisela seems to have felt some inclination, action and music were viewed as linked, and spectators would have expected that link. One scholar suggests that whether or not the music fit, it would have been viewed as fitting into the action. From a purely musical standpoint – ignoring for the moment Joachim's pantomimic tempo instructions – the articulation signs, double bars, and fermatas provide some link to and synchronization with the text, which spectators presumably would have related to the plot of the play within the play. If we accept Edward Nye's claim that in the *ballet d'action* "music intended to be non-diegetic becomes, in the spectator's mind, diegetic, rendering the drama implausible,"<sup>88</sup> our question is how Joachim's periodic and non-referential music would have been perceived and how "supportive" of the pantomimic action it would have been. Perhaps the character of Joachim's music – its generally light, dance-like mood – would have been heard as a "character sketch" of Psyche at the

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<sup>87</sup> Nye, 228.

<sup>88</sup> Nye, 191, cites [Ange Goudar], *Lettre de Madame S.G.A.M. L\*\*\* au Sujet du Divertissement du Théâtre del Cocomero et de la Comédie Française du Théâtre Sainte Marie* (n. p.: n. p., 1776), 9, 12.

moment when she sees Amor for the first time after having believed he was a monster, that is to say, in the lamp scene?

## 5.4 Mendelssohn and Joachim

If we wish to compare Joachim's *Versuch* to one melodramatic work that he definitely knew, we have to go back to 1843 – when Joachim sat in the audience of Mendelssohn's Potsdam premiere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Op. 61). How well the young musician remembered this occasion in 1856 is uncertain but some evidence suggests that especially the play within the play of Shakespeare's work – "Pyramus and Thisbe" (Ovid) – may have left a lasting impression.<sup>89</sup> This playlet inspired by a classical myth, in any case, showcases one possibility of how a composer could musically address its self-referential nature, which is deeply ingrained in the *mise en abyme* structure.

It was likely Mendelssohn himself<sup>90</sup> who attracted the twelve year-old Joachim to Leipzig in the spring of 1843, presumably with a plan that the young violinist would attend the new conservatory Mendelssohn had founded. Joachim, in any event, would

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<sup>89</sup> Although of indirect significance, Mendelssohn's Op. 61 is mentioned – together with its theater play – in Joachim's correspondence in 1860. See *Joachim Briefe*, II:66, letter of January 2, 1860 from Clara to Joachim.

<sup>90</sup> R. Larry Todd, "Mendelssohn, Felix," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51795pg6> (accessed April 17, 2014).

then begin his instruction with Mendelssohn and Moritz Hauptmann, both on the faculty of the new institution. But 1843 was also the year when Joachim gave his significant Leipzig debut on August 19, accompanied on the piano by none other than Mendelssohn.<sup>91</sup> And when a little later Mendelssohn conducted a performance during which Joachim played, with orchestra, H. W. Ernst's challenging *Othello* fantasy,<sup>92</sup> the collaboration and friendship between the two – Mendelssohn, at the height of his fame; Joachim, at the beginning of his career as soloist – was firmly established.

But besides Mendelssohn's efforts to establish Joachim's presence in some of Europe's most prestigious concert halls,<sup>93</sup> it was also he, who, with Schumann and others, quickened Joachim's intellectual development by encouraging the little "Teufelsbraten" to read Jean Paul and Shakespeare, two authors who would remain his "friends" in adulthood.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, I:55.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, I:58.

<sup>93</sup> In May 1844 Mendelssohn even took the young Joachim on a trip to London, where he arrived on May 8, 1844, and where Joachim had the opportunity to show, in a concert on May 27, his talent to the London audience with what would become his "warhorse" – Beethoven's Violin Concerto, an occasion where parts of the Schauspielmusik of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were also played. R. Larry Todd, *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Sein Leben. Seine Musik*, 517.

<sup>94</sup> Moser, I:59: "Like Schumann [Mendelssohn] prized above all such artists, 'who not only passably played one or two instruments, but rather complete men who understood Shakespeare and Jean Paul.'" ("Gleich Schumann schätzte er [Mendelssohn] in erster Linie solche Künstler,

Returning to the incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Music Op. 61, we note that Joachim had two occasions to hear it: First, parts were performed on one of the five Philharmonic Society Concerts during a trip Mendelssohn and Joachim took to London in 1844. But more significant, Joachim witnessed the work's premiere in Potsdam on October 14, 1843,<sup>95</sup> in a production by Ludwig Tieck, with whom Mendelssohn had collaborated before.<sup>96</sup>

At this time Greek tragedy, in fact, was playing a large role in the cultural life of Berlin during the reign of the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1840-1861). This cultural Hellenism is evident not only in Mendelssohn's compositional projects in the early 1840s, but also, intriguingly, from the letters of members of the aristocracy, including the von Arnim family, especially Bettine and her three daughters: Maximiliane, Armgart, and Gisela. In 1841 and 1845 Sophocles's *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus* (produced by Tieck with music by Mendelssohn) were featured at the court of Friedrich Wilhelm IV, two parts of a projected Oedipus trilogy. Around this time Bettine

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'die nicht nur ein oder zwei Instrumente passabel spielen, sondern ganze Menschen, die den Shakespeare und den Jean Paul verstehen'.")

<sup>95</sup> R. Larry Todd, *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy*, 503.

<sup>96</sup> R. Larry Todd, "Mendelssohn, Felix," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Also, Todd, *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy*, 503.

had already pleaded before Friedrich Wilhelm the case of assisting the Grimm brothers, who were hired at the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1840 after having been previously associated and involved with the protests of the “Göttinger Seven.”<sup>97</sup>

But what is more, Bettine von Arnim also frequented the court with her daughters. As was customary for aristocratic families, her daughters were “introduced to society” in 1842 and from then on participated in events at the court, of which one visit to the royal theatre – to hear Euripides’s *Medea* in 1843 (with music by Taubert) – is documented.<sup>98</sup> Possibly both Joachim and Gisela were at the premiere of the new production of Mendelssohn’s/Tieck’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* on October 14, 1843. Their later shared passion for the Italian actress Ristori in Ovid’s *Myrrha*, we may assume, was a consequence of their exposure to Berlin’s lively culture of ancient tragedy in the early 1840s.<sup>99</sup>

Already in *Antigone* (1841) Mendelssohn had used melodrama where “the parts of the principal characters were left as spoken dialogue, or set as melodrama,”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Neumann, Friedrich, “Grimm, Wilhelm Carl,” in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 7 (1966), <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118542265.html>; Dramaliewa, 12.

<sup>98</sup> Dramaliewa, 14-15.

<sup>99</sup> Joachim first saw Ristori in the fall of 1856, while Gisela had been introduced to her at least since 1855.

accompanied by the orchestra. But most popular were Mendelssohn's twelve numbers and finale composed in 1843 for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which encompasses entr'acte movements (the Scherzo, Nocturne and Wedding March) as well as a few shorter pieces, strophic song, and, of special relevance to us, "miniatures for the tradesmen and their presentation of 'Pyramus and Thisbe,'" <sup>101</sup> set as melodrama.

Shakespeare's "Pyramus and Thisbe" is presented as a "play within a play" for the royal audience of the court of Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But originally the two lovers Pyramus and Thisbe, of course, were most famously represented in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where their story presents a "literary ancestor of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*." <sup>102</sup> But what kinds of melodrama or melodramatic parts were featured in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

To judge by the topoi of metamorphosis and donkey head, Shakespeare's "play within the play" was apparently inspired by Apuleius's *Golden Ass*, the same work in

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<sup>100</sup> R. Larry Todd, "Mendelssohn, Felix," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> David Leeming, "Pyramus and Thisbe," in *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology* (Oxford University Press, 2005), <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195156690.001.0001/acref-9780195156690-e-1322>.



which we find Cupid and Psyche<sup>103</sup> When the tradesmen eventually perform the Ovidian playlet in the final act, it impresses, of course, as a rather droll burlesque.<sup>104</sup> Considering the change in character that Shakespeare implemented by turning the Ovidian tragedy into a comical parody, we understand why it was viewed as burlesque.

At a hilarious moment in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, during a rehearsal of "Pyramus and Thisbe," the Tradesmen agree that "the play's characters must include the moonshine by which the lovers meet and the wall through whose cranny they speak."<sup>105</sup> In other words, Moonshine and Wall introduce themselves rather formally to the audience(s), a detail that later was played out again in another droll "reenactment" that involved Joachim and Mendelssohn. It occurred on Mendelssohn's last birthday, February 3, 1847, at his Leipzig residence, as reported by Ignaz Moscheles:

Then came a charade on the word "Gewandhaus." Joachim, adorned with a fantastic wig, à la Paganini, played a hare-brained impromptu on the G string (*Ge-Saite*). The scene between *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" followed and stood for *Wand* ("wall"). For *Haus*, Charlotte [Mrs.

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<sup>103</sup> "Midsummer Night's Dream, A," in *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* (Oxford University Press, 2001), <http://www.oxfordreference.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780198117353.001.0001/acref-9780198117353-e-1906>.

<sup>104</sup> Franz Schmitt-von Mühlenfels, "Pyramus und Thisbe. Rezeptionstypen eines Ovidischen Stoffes in Literatur, Kunst und Musik," in *Studien zum Fortwirken der Antike*, ed. Walter Marg and Horst Rüdiger, 12 vols. (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1972), VI:145.

<sup>105</sup> *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 39, No. 662 (1898): 225.

Moscheles] acted a scene she had written herself, in which she is discovered knitting a blue stocking, and soliloquizing on the foibles of female authoresses, advising them to attend to their domestic duties. By way of enforcing the moral, she calls her cook –the cook was I myself [Moscheles], and my appearance in cap and dress was the signal for a general uproar. Mendelssohn was sitting in a wicker armchair, which creaked as he rocked to and fro, the room echoing with his peals of laughter. The word *Gewandhaus* was illustrated by a full orchestra, Mendelssohn's children and mine playing on little drums and trumpets, Joachim leading with a toy violin, and my Felix conducting *à la Jullien*, It was splendid! <sup>106</sup>

This was one of Joachim's last happy gatherings with Mendelssohn who died nine months later. The premiere of Mendelssohn's Op. 61 and its reenactment during this celebration may have contributed to make "Pyramus and Thisbe," indeed, a memorable play within the play for Joachim.

The link between "Thisbe and Pyramus" and "Cupid and Psyche" persists on multiple levels. In the latter (version of Apuleius) the metamorphosis of Psyche (play within the play) is a symbol for the transformation of the main character Lucius into a donkey (outer sections of the play). Shakespeare presumably was hinting at a similar metamorphosis when he used the same image for Bottom's transformation into a donkey in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. And as for Shakespeare's play and Gisela's *Das*

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 225-230. Also see R. Larry Todd, *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. Sein Leben. Seine Musik* (Stuttgart: Carus, 2008), 591.

*Herz der Laiis*, both employ the device of *mise en abyme*, and both insert a mythological love story.

On the compositional level Mendelssohn's and Joachim's scores resemble each other in using a similar syntax and notational features often encountered in melodrama, in which abundant double bars/fermatas, repeat signs, and expansive texts (more in the former's, less in the latter's score) prevail. But there is one aspect of Mendelssohn's music that Joachim did not imitate.

Although as an advanced classical scholar Mendelssohn was deeply fascinated with ancient texts and myths,<sup>107</sup> in "Pyramus and Thisbe" (Nos. 10 and 11 in Mendelssohn's score) it was not so much Ovid that captured Mendelssohn's attention. Taking his cue from Shakespeare, Mendelssohn seems to have emphasized the contrast between tragedy and comedy by giving the "Pyramus and Thisbe" scene also *musically* a burlesque character. Indeed, Mendelssohn responds to Shakespeare's burlesque interpretation of Ovid by musically playing on the idea of high and low styles, to allude to the two different realities involved: that of the myth and that of the main play. The

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<sup>107</sup> As evident in his music to Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus*, where he preserved the text's meter, thus conjuring up the "ancient" character of the myth.

efficiency of the music and its subtle expression seem related to the procedure of tying motives to different meanings when they *return*.<sup>108</sup>

Let us briefly take a look at Mendelssohn's play within the play. After Philostrate has announced that the play is ready ("Beliebt es Eurer Hohheit? Der Prolog ist fertig") an eight-measure fanfare theme in C major – played by trumpets and timpani – calls the audience(s) to attention in a military style, thus opening Scene No. 10 (Ex. 81).

**Allegro comodo**

Dialogue till:  
Let lion, moonshine, wall, and  
lovers twain,  
At large discourse, while here  
they do remain

Dialogue till: Now die, die, die, die, die.  
(Pyramus dies. Exit Moonshine.)

**Example 81, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Op. 61 No. 10 (mm. 1-15<sup>109</sup>)**

<sup>108</sup> Regarding Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Waeber points out the motive at the opening of the *Notturmo*, the entr'acte music, heard in the horns, "se fait certes entendre le Rideau baissé." The next melodramatic scene, however, No. 8 brings back the motive in a different function: "Ce même motif se fait réentendre, précisément après l'injonction suivante d'Obéron: Ertön, Musik!" (Waeber, 130). As has been noted, the motive's reappearance here is entirely part of the diegesis and "retrospectively invalidates the presumably 'non-diegetic' nature of the entr'acte music." See Waeber, 130 [my translation].

<sup>109</sup> Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's *Werke: kritisch durchgesehene Ausgabe*, ed. J. Rietz (Leipzig, 1874–7), xv/4.

Then Theseus gives a brief introduction of the play to be staged and also introduces its main characters, Thisbe and Pyramus, as well as Moonlight (because Thisbe and Pyramus first met in moonlight), Wall (through which the lovers converse) and Lion (the creature who in Ovid sets off the tragedy).<sup>110</sup>

Then the fanfare theme sounds a second time (see Ex. 81, second system) – as if, this time, calling the audience to attention for the play within the play, and followed by the brief play itself, now accompanied by Mendelssohn's music. The first character to enter the stage is Pyramus (see Ex. 8 second line, third measure), who sees the blood-stained veil of Thisbe and then kills himself. In reaction more music sounds – a *Marcia Funebre*, dark and grave in tone and evocative in rhythm and key (C minor). The music here expresses the emotional reality of death to the listeners of the play – those in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and those at the court of Friedrich Wilhelm IV on October 14, 1843, but more so for the former because the latter, at this moment, begins to sense that

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<sup>110</sup> To give a brief summary of "Pyramus and Thisbe": "A young Babylonian couple, Pyramus and Thisbe, were betrothed; but the families quarreled, broke off relations and forbade the young people to see each other. They decided to meet at night and elope. Then the tragic chain of events began that has given their story immortality: while waiting for Pyramus, Thisbe is frightened away by a lion and leaves her scarf behind; Pyramus arrives, finds the scarf bloody and mauled by the lion, and stabs himself believing that Thisbe is dead; returning, Thisbe finds him dying, and she stabs herself; and finally her father arrives to find both young people dead, and he stabs himself too." See Marita P. McClymonds, "Pyramus and Thisbe," *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.

the funeral march betrays a highly comical vein. Then Thisbe enters. Unlike Pyramus's lines, hers are underlined with music, and Mendelssohn could not resist his own comical commentary at the end of her lines - in the form of exposed parallel fifths – which seem to reveal – to those in the audience(s) able to catch this detail – something we have sensed all along: a refreshingly comical reinterpretation of Ovidian tragedy. After her lines “Ich scheide gern aus dem Leben” the music has the final say in the continued funeral march (Ex. 82).

**MARCIA FUNEBRE**  
Andante comodo

Clarinet in C  
Hippolita. How chance moonshine is gone etc. *mf*  
Dialogue continues

Bassoon  
*p*

Timpani in C.G.  
*p*

Thisbe (begins to speak till:)  
Dead, dead? A tomb etc.

*p*

(Thisbe continues to speak during the music.)

Example 82, Mendelssohn, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Op. 61 No. 10, *Marcia Funebre* (mm. 1-16)



**Example 83, Mendelssohn, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Op. 61 No. 10, *Marcia Funebre* (mm. 17-24)**

What follows after the funeral march (Exx. 82-83) is the dance of clowns, contrasting the “tragedy” with rustic and spirited dance music in B major, which thus concludes the staging of the play within the play.

The question whether Mendelssohn’s fanfare that introduces “Pyramus and Thisbe” belongs to the world of the play within the play or to the world of the tradesmen (Bottom and company) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* could also be applied to the play within the play intended to unfold in the middle scene of *Das Herz der Laïs*, when Laïs performs in pantomime and to music the playlet “Cupid and Psyche.” Because Gisela’s “Cupid and Psyche” is a monodrama, Psyche is the only character actually embodied (by *Laïs*), while the other figures of the myth, including Amor, Venus, and creatures of the underworld, are hinted at through gestures or comments from the watching audience, which consists of Nero, the housemaster, and the servant.

The idea of two audiences – one “real” and the other within the play – plays conspicuously with the topos of (self-) reflection. In Mendelssohn’s music Ovid’s “tragedy” becomes through Shakespearean metamorphosis a “tragical comedy,” “comically distorted” and tedious. Shakespeare’s “detailed dramaturgy” (“überausführliche Dramaturgie”) extends to the music by explicitly introducing the players of the Thisbe-Pyramus world through self-reflection, arguably related to the play within the play. As Schmitt-von Mühlenfels observes: “This dramatic element is thereby led to its extreme conclusion, in that Wall and Lion are also depicted [which Joachim, Moscheles, and Mendelssohn recalled, as noted above, in February 1847]: ‘In this same interlude it doth befall/That I, one Snout by name, present a wall.’ The additional explanation ‘In this same interlude’ belongs to the repetitive parody of an overly fine-grained dramaturgy.”<sup>111</sup> Schmidt-von Mühlenfels adds, quoting A. W. Schlegel (whose German translation Mendelssohn used): “For the grotesque play within the play *Pyramus and Thisbe* is chosen not without significance: it is, just like the pathetic part of the piece, a secret meeting of two lovers in the forest and their disturbance through a hostile accident that concludes the whole with the most delightful parody.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> “Dieses dramatische Element wird dadurch ad absurdum geführt, dass sich auch Wand und Löwe namentlich vorstellen: ‘In this same interlude it doth befall/That I, one Snout by name, present a wall.’ Die zusätzliche Erklärung “In this same interlude” gehört zu der wiederholten Parodie einer überausführlichen Dramaturgie.” Franz Schmitt-von Mühlenfels, 143.



Here is not the place to interpret the meaning of Shakespeare's parodied "Pyramus and Thisbe" or its relation to the external plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. But the question remains how the *music* communicates on different levels. As if speaking separately as a narrator, the music is in the superior position of being able to add comical commentary. Mendelssohn fully realizes the humorous potential of Shakespeare's text by indeed "over-introducing" the Pyramus and Thisbe play through the two fanfares calling us to attention. Furthermore, with its implicit smile (the "forbidden" parallel fifths), the music nevertheless puts on a grave outward expression in the funeral march through its use of established markers, creating, indeed, a "comical tragedy." For music to be self-referential, it needs to hint at a certain recognizable topos, which, in the case of Mendelssohn's "Pyramus and Thisbe," can be quite subtle and rich in nuanced connections and levels. In Joachim's *Versuch* it becomes obvious that he is *not* responding to Gisela's text in that way; he does not allude to motives or established topoi within the *Versuch*, nor does he appear to play with different worlds or realities,

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<sup>112</sup> "Zu dem grotesken Schauspiel im Schauspiel ist nicht ohne Bedeutung Pyramus und Thisbe gewählt: es ist gerade wie der pathetische Teil des Stückes eine geheime Zusammenkunft zweier Liebenden im Walde und ihre Verstörung durch einen feindseligen Zufall und beschließt das Ganze mit der ergötzlichsten Parodie." Von Mühlenfels, 144, cites August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*, ed. Edgar Lohner, Zweiter Teil (Stuttgart, 1967), 160.

although, just as in Shakespeare's play, Gisela's conception offers the potential for a similar treatment.

The music of Joachim does not seem to attempt to account for the text musically, but does so through the textual level and the notational features like double bars that are evident visually in the score. Unlike three of his most important contemporaries – Schumann, Liszt and Mendelssohn – and unlike what was then customary in melodramatic/pantomimic music for the stage, Joachim does not embrace the wide and diverse genre of melodrama as a way of revealing a musical sensitivity to the text. But this does not mean that he did not respond to Gisela's melodramatic imagination and her communicated wishes. Nor does it mean that Joachim was critical of all aspects of melodrama. While he seemed to have a reluctance to depict or portray anything that could be interpreted as effect, we cannot rule out that the music he wrote was not, in his view, expressive of the "Cupid and Psyche" plot.

### **5.5 Joachim's Versuch eines Tanzes: A Non-referential Character Sketch**

The impression that prevails, from a musical standpoint, in Joachim's *Versuch eines Tanzes* is that of a dance, light and elegant in character, while with regard to the text-music relationship the music is rather unspecific. As Joachim had not yet been exposed heavily to melodrama at the time of composition (between January and July

1856) he seems to have lacked the experience he would obtain later in the year when Gisela introduced him to the Italian actress Adelaide La Ristori, whom she had already seen in 1855.<sup>113</sup> Because Joachim had not experienced the art of the actress for whom he was writing his music – all he knew was her name and that Gisela wished to perform *Das Herz der Laïs* with Ristori in the role of Psyche to his music – Joachim presumably would have struggled to apprehend what Gisela had in mind. Until much later in the year (fall 1856) Joachim had no idea that he would be as overwhelmed and captivated by Ristori's acting as Gisela.

And so Joachim's music seems to be, above all, a melodramatic approximation revealing two details about his frame of mind: first, that he was unfamiliar with the melodramatic aesthetic, and second, that he was reluctant to compose music that would point to effects or to something specific, be it in terms of structure (emphasizing the play within the play as Mendelssohn had) or in terms of motivic allusiveness (such as in the melodramatic piano ballade or the nineteenth-century successors of the *ballet d'action*, which Joachim, as far as is documented, also did not know in July 1856. And the only melodrama music (and play within the play that he surely knew, Mendelssohn's incidental music Op. 61) apparently did not serve as inspiration, perhaps because Mendelssohn's treatment of "Thisbe and Pyramus" was a world removed in character, a

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<sup>113</sup> Adelaide Ristori played Alfieri's *Myrrha* in the Berlin *Schauspielhaus*, on November 12, 1855.

“burlesque,” while Gisela’s “Cupid and Psyche” scene was serious in tone, dominated by hybrid symbols of religious, spiritual, and moral meaning (albeit also of dalliance). Indeed, Gisela repeatedly assured Joachim that the music should concern “Verklärung” and in her mind the character of Psyche was also “verklärt” (as opposed to “of the flesh,” like Venus<sup>114</sup>) or at least became “verklärt” by the end of the myth.<sup>115</sup> But however Gisela advised Joachim in his composing, we cannot easily decide whether or not Joachim acknowledged it in his music – the sound of “Verklärung” seems difficult to imagine or pin down with regard to existing musical topoi – as does the character of Psyche if we view the *Versuch* as essentially a character sketch.

But the avoidance of “effects,” which Joachim was clearly aiming for, did not necessarily conflict in his mind with writing melodramatic music. In other words, the framed gestures of his music, we could argue, presumably did not point to a void. It could be that the gestures pointed to how he imagined his music in relation to a pantomime in the summer of 1856. As it happens, he seems to have been very interested in both melodrama and pantomime later in that year. Thus, his interest presumably did not suddenly arise but was already subtly manifested in his *Versuch* – lacking only what he thought were mere “effects.”

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<sup>114</sup> Hs-#10472a.

<sup>115</sup> Dramaliewa, “Gisela von Arnim: Leben, Persönlichkeit und Schaffen,” 150.

To end this chapter, let us review Joachim's comments – his letters between 1856 and 1859 about some actresses and "effects," as well as about his aversion to Lisztian "effects," which began to take shape from 1855 onwards. What may first seem contradictory – a serious interest in acting (on one hand) and a disapproval of actors and performers using effect-laden means to convey their art (on the other) – does not seem to be a contradiction in Joachim's *Versuch eines Tanzes*. It expresses the aesthetic change taking place in 1856 and the following years, in which his aversion to "effects" would grow, while the passion for certain actors – and not for others – would also grow. That Joachim did write another melodrama in 1859 confirms that it was neither the melodramatic genre nor the general aesthetic of spoken text over music from which he distanced himself. It was mostly an aesthetic of "effects," a term often used in relation to "Effekthascherei," that he strongly opposed.

While early in 1856 Joachim complained that it was difficult writing a ballet for Ristori "because he had not seen her" ("weil ich sie nicht gesehen")<sup>116</sup> by October 1856, he had seen her on stage.<sup>117</sup> Then Joachim had more occasions to attend her

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<sup>116</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:304, letter to Gisela von Arnim of January 18, 1856.

<sup>117</sup> "Wie gerne sähe ich einmal wieder eine Künstler-Erscheinung, die mich ganz erfüllte, ohne Kritik, um mich bei meinem Enthusiasmusmangel zu rechtfertigen vor mir selber! Ja wohl ist 'Schwärmen' liebend leben, und nach Deiner Beschreibung Deiner Seelenfreundin erwarte ich von ihr [Ristori] solche Erhebung." *Joachim Briefe*, I:376, letter of October 19, 1856. A few days later he would have the pleasure of seeing Ristori. On October 25, 1856 Joachim wrote to Gisela

performances between 1856 and 1858, and Joachim's reaction is best left to his own account:

In the last days I've had the singular pleasure to see Ristori here as Mary Stuart and as Medea. – It is for me the highest, which I can dream of with regard to power of art linked with the purest, most delightful nature, this woman!<sup>118</sup>  
If this account praises Ristori in the highest of superlatives, he writes in 1858 that

Ristori is, for him, "my idol of all female artists. [...] A terrific woman!"<sup>119</sup> It is not exactly clear how Ristori's acting combined the elements of pantomime and music. But according to one account her chosen plays "consisted of the kind of drama that fell into disrepute before the century was out, and is now quite forgotten, even by Hollywood. Parts of it survive, however, in the operatic repertoire, where romanticism and

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"[that he will see] in ein paar Tagen Dich und die Ristori," (*Joachim Briefe*, I:376) while a letter to Clara confirms his intention to travel for Berlin: "Morgen reise ich fuer drei Tage nach Berlin," he wrote on October 26, 1856 (*Joachim Briefe*, I:378). In a letter from December 21, 1856, he confirms that he has seen Ristori (*Joachim Briefe*, I:388).

<sup>118</sup> "In den letzten Tagen hatte ich den einzigen Genuss die Ristori hier als Maria Stuart und als Medea zu sehen. – Es ist für mich das Höchste, was ich von der Gewalt der Kunst im Verein mit der reinsten, reizvollsten Natur träumen kann, diese Frau! Ich hörte, dass sie im Frühjahr in London spielen wird, das ist für mich ein gewaltiger Magnet zur Saison. Erfährst du etwas darüber so schreib mir es." Manuscript letter from Joseph Joachim to Heinrich Joachim of February 15, 1858, Ms. 1991.2.58.2, Brahms Institute Lübeck.

<sup>119</sup> "Mein Abgott aller Künstlerinnen, die Ristori ist hier; die musst du auch einmal sehen. Eine herrliche Frau." Manuscript letter from Joachim to Heinrich of January 24, 1858. Ms. 1991.2.58.1. Brahms Institute Lübeck.

melodramatic starkness [...] is still attractive.”<sup>120</sup> But another element Joachim noted was Ristori’s “purest nature” (“reinste [...] Natur”), which speaks to the “pietistic attitude” often attributed to her in real life, which “had repercussions on many plays in her repertory.”<sup>121</sup>

Still, apparently not all actresses were viewed so favorably in Joachim’s letters. For example, Marie Seebach (1829-1897) evoked some criticism. Joachim lamented too many “moments of effect” (“Effektmomente”) in her acting and also criticized that the “warmth was not distributed evenly over the whole character [in the play].” As a positive foil, he brings up Ristori, “in whose acting the smallest gesture is meaningful.”<sup>122</sup> In this appraisal Joachim’s most salient criticism concerns Seebach’s “effects,” about which he complained elsewhere,<sup>123</sup> which seem to conflict with his ideal

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<sup>120</sup> Henry Knepler, *The Gilded Stage* (London: Constable, 1968), 107.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>122</sup> “Es ist doch in einzelnen Szenen eine ausserordentliche Begabung bei ihr [Seebach] – aber dennoch komme ich nicht zu wirklichem Enthusiasmus für sie. Mir scheint, als legte sie auf die *Effektmomente* zu viel Gewicht und vertheilte die Wärme nicht gleichmässig genug auf den ganzen Character. Ich muss da immer als Ideal an die Ristori denken, bei der die kleinste Bewegung bedeutungsvoll ist – das ist eben Genie: gleichmässig liebevoll eine Schöpfung zu überstrahlen! Das vermisse ich bei der Seebach.” *Joachim Briefe*, I:449, letter to Clara Schumann of October 3, 1857 [my italics].

<sup>123</sup> “Tomorrow is the first concert: Ms. Seebach speaks in it the melodramas to Weber’s *Preziosa* music; I had to correspond with her about it although I do not conduct the work, because I initiated the performance through a conversation with the king. The woman is, after all, only a

aesthetic. It is difficult to discern, however, what exactly Joachim was criticizing. The search for “effects” was a popular term of critics and played a considerable role in the journalistic debates of the approaching “war of the romantics.” An unpublished report in the memoirs of a near contemporary composer, Ernst Rudorff (1840-1916), relates: “Liszt has left behind a school of arbitrariness, of affectation, of effectual poses from which one serves oneself here in order to be conspicuous [...], consisting of exaggerations and contrasts.”<sup>124</sup> Similarly directed at exaggerations and self-portrayal, Joachim’s disparaging comments about Liszt’s “effects” began surfacing already in 1855. In one letter he reported to Clara Schumann: “The other day I felt the whole impact of what it means (I visited the Liszt concert) to see a human being, whom I have often

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common actress, albeit very talented one, who has made the effect in front of audiences the tyrant of her life. It is sad to admit to oneself but most who deal with art are more or less creeping in front of others and proud before themselves.” (“Morgen ist das erste Concert: Fräulein Seebach spricht darin die Melodramen zur Weber’schen *Preziosa* Musik; ich hatte mit ihr darüber zu correspondiren, obwohl ich das Werk nicht dirigire, weil ich die Aufführung durch ein Gespräch mit dem König veranlasst. Die Dame ist denn doch nur eine, wenn auch sehr begabte, gewöhnliche Schauspielerin, die den Effekt vor dem Publikum zum Tyrannen ihres Lebens macht. Es ist schlimm sich’s zu gestehen, aber fast alle, die sich mit der Kunst befassen, sind mehr oder minder kriechend vor den andern und eitel vor sich selbst. [three cross symbols “+++”].”) *Joachim Briefe*, I:384, letter to Gisela of December 12, 1856.

<sup>124</sup> “Liszt hat eine Schule der Willkür, der Affektation, der effektvollen Pose hinterlassen [...]. Das Rüstzeug, dessen man sich hier bedient, um aufzufallen und geistreich zu erscheinen, besteht in [...] Übertreibungen der Stärkegrade [...] [und] der Kontraste [...] [among other things].” Brahms Institute Lübeck, “Ernst Rudorff über die Künstlerschaft Liszts und Joachims,” in *Aus seinen Lebenserinnerungen*. ABH 6.3.106 (anonymous copy).



called a friend, whom I would have forgiven colossal mistakes in defense of his powers, his genius, in lowest servility before himself, in disgusting hypocrisy before himself. Shame on him, who wants to improve but can't help using his moaning, his abject pain before the divinity in awareness of again abusing his powers to bargain for an effect."<sup>125</sup>

It seems almost impossible to ask what the nature of these "effects" was without entering the polemic debate. In one of the many antagonistic journalistic pieces written especially in the later 1850s and 1860s one author, the Lisztian protégé Hans von Bronsart, claimed:

Is it honest to deceive the public with the catch phrase "sensationalism" ("Effekthascherei"), a phrase, which one is as unable to account for as the small children before the "black man"? Have you debated before, how mood, effect ("Wirkung") and effect ("Effekt") are related to one another? [...] Why do you call "Effekthascherei" the bass clarinet, the viola d'amore, and harp in Meyerbeer, and not the three horns in *Fidelio*, the trombones in Gluck's *Alceste* [...], the third horn in the "Eroica," the three trumpets and oboe da caccia in Bach, etc.? Why did the old Italians write in twelve, sixteen, and many parts? How complicated! Does that give off the appearance of "grasping for simplicity" ("Einfachheitschascherei") or of a reticence to use "great means" ("großen Mitteln")?<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> "Noch neulich empfand ich in ganzer Stärke, was das heisst, als mir der Schmerz ward (ich besuchte das Liszt-Concert), einen Menschen, den ich oft Freund genannt hatte, dem ich kolossale Irrthümer gerne in Ehrfurcht vor seiner Kraft, vor seinem Genie verzeihen hätte, in niedrigster Kriecherei vor dem Publikum, in ekler Heuchelei vor sich selbst zu erkennen. Pfui über den, der sich bessern will und's nicht lassen kann, sein Stöhnen, sein kriechend Weh vor der Gottheit im Bewusstsein missbrauchter Gewalt wieder eitel zum Effekt auszufeilschen." *Joachim Briefe*, I:298, letter to Clara Schumann of December 9, 1855.

This long tirade explicates some of the problems in the air already in 1855. Nevertheless, in the diverging accounts one can discern a distinction between “große Mittel” and “kleine Mittel” as between conspicuousness and seeming inconspicuousness.<sup>127</sup> Recent research has discussed a variation of this dichotomy in the aesthetic of the violinist Joachim in the later nineteenth century. But in 1856, evidently, some of the reluctance to attract conspicuous attention was already obvious from the composer’s comments and arguably from his music aesthetic as a *composer* even in a melodramatic piece.

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<sup>126</sup> “Ist es redlich, das Publikum mit dem Stichwort ‘Effekthascherei’ ins Bockhorn zu jagen, von welchem Worte es sich, wie Ihr wohl wißt, ebensowenig Rechenschaft abzulegen vermag, als die kleinen Kinder von dem ‘schwarzen Mann’? Habt ihr vorher auseinandergesetzt, wie sich Stimmung, Wirkung und Effekt zu einander verhalten? [...] Wo sind Eure Werke, in denen Ihr Eure Befähigung nachweist, die, den Eindruck erhöhende Wirkung von dem, die Gedankenarmuth verbergenden Effekt zu unterscheiden? Wo ist Euer Kriterium? [...] Warum nennt Ihr ‘Effekthascherei’ die Baßklarinette, viole d’amour, und Harfe bei Meyerbeer, und nicht die drei Hörner im Fidelio, die Posaunen in Gluck’s Alceste [...], das dritte Horn in der Eroica, die drei Trompeten und oboe da caccia bei Bach, die Bassethörner bei Mozart? Wenn man alle großen Wirkungen durch kleine Mittel erzielen soll, warum hat Bach in seiner Passionsmusik zwei verschiedene Chöre und Orchester um den cantus firmus: ‘O Lamm Gottes unschuldig’ gruppiert? Warum schrieben die alten Italiener zwölf=, sechzehn= und mehrstimmig? Wie kompliziert! Hat das etwa den Anschein von ‘Einfachheitschascherei’ oder von Scheu vor ‘großen Mitteln.’” Hans von Bronsart, *Musikalische Pflichten* (Leipzig: Heinrich Matthes, 1858), 15-16.

<sup>127</sup> Leistra-Jones “Virtue and Virtuosity: Brahms, the Concerto, and the Politics of Performance in the Late-Nineteenth Century,” 83, speaks of the “almost urgent need to differentiate the authentic or truthful performer from the negative stereotype of the virtuoso-as-actor” in the Brahms circle.

Perhaps we can further understand Joachim's position in his comparison of Seebach with his favorite, Ristori, in whose acting he perceived the smallest gesture to be meaningful but also the "warmth" to be "distributed evenly" over the whole character, presumably without pointing to glaring "effects." It turns out that the "smallest gestures" of which Ristori was capable were also attributed to her in contemporary reviews:

[She was evidently able to dominate her scenes in subtler ways. Morley reports one example, from Ristori's performance of Fazio:] She is not the last speaker when she leaves the stage, but it is a rule with Madame Ristori never to quit the stage without making a point as she does go, and Fazio's last words were a jesting reference to Aldabella [his former love]. Bianca [Ristori], therefore turns toward [...] and with two little parting gestures of the hand only – one representing [a] playful but half-earnest warning, the other trusting love – impossible to any English actress, natural to an Italian, sums up in two instants the meaning of the scene.<sup>128</sup>

Perhaps this can elucidate to some extent what Joachim meant in October 1857 when he noted that the "smallest gesture is meaningful" in Ristori's acting. But not only acting and presumably pantomime appeared in a different light after Joachim's encounter with Ristori; in the same month, October 1856, he also heard some of the melodramatic Schumann ballades previously unknown to him.<sup>129</sup> What emerges from

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<sup>128</sup> Henry Knepler, *The Gilded Stage*, 110.

<sup>129</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, I:378, letter from Joachim to Clara Schumann of October 25, 1856. Joachim tells Clara about having heard "die Seebach" sing the ballades of Robert Schumann, with great acclaim.

*Versuch eines Tanzes*, then, is perhaps a composer with an open mind, in whose aesthetic, however, certain tendencies toward an “absolute” aesthetic were beginning to crystallize.

Returning to Joachim’s gestures contained within double bars, it is telling that the text corresponds closely enough to Gisela’s for us to discern that Joachim’s tempo instructions might very well have been intended for the “lamp scene.” Tellingly, the lamp scene is one of the most often depicted scenes of the Psyche iconography. Many artists chose to depict it, including Raphael, whose drawings, inspired by Apuleius’s version of the myth, circulated during the 1830s in steel etchings.<sup>130</sup> In the eighteenth century, Angelika Kauffmann’s *Psyche betrachtet den schlafenden Amor* (1744) was widely known.<sup>131</sup> Although Gisela had implicitly suggested that Joachim could portray the lamp scene,<sup>132</sup> the question remains whether Gisela knew or imagined that he depicted this scene, by concealing it in the pantomimic “tempo” instructions? The plot Joachim

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<sup>130</sup> M. Lemolt Phalary, *The History of Psyche, from Raphael’s Drawings, Etched on Steel by Reveil with a New Tale* (London: Charles Tilt 86, Fleet Street, 1832).

<sup>131</sup> “[The lamp scene] gained part of its popularity also as erotic inversion of the motive popular at the same time – the motif of the sleeping female being watched by a male observer,” Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 147, points to Ellen Spickernagel, who proposed this idea.

<sup>132</sup> “[Du] kannst [...] ja [...] die Seligkeit der Psyche beim Erblicken Amors [kompositorisch darstellen und] verklären.” Letter from Gisela to Joachim, Spring 1856, Hs-#10472A.

received from Gisela with the attached "Pantomime" sheet had this to say about

Psyche's reaction when she saw Amor:

The first beam that falls on him reveals his beautiful face, – she recognizes a God, who, by loving her, will lift her to higher realms, her joy exceeds all boundaries, she points upward, and so forth, then her joy transforms into childlike delight, she touches him, his wings, she wants to bend down to him, wants to kiss him, the lamp falls out of her hands.<sup>133</sup>

What did Joachim think when he read Gisela's comments before composing his music? Were Gisela and Joachim aware of the multi-leveled subtle implications of Psyche's view of Amor? At the same time the choice of Amor and the aulos represents, as does the iconography of Cupid and Psyche in general, the idiosyncratic mix of serious existential questions of the soul, death and immortality while at the same time carrying the subtle connotations of "dalliance" ("Tändelspiel").

Gisela's choice of the motive eminently reflects her situation at that point in life, when she was in the process of deciding against the "dalliance" with Joachim and against walking to the altar with the musician. Whether one can see the continuation of her relationship with him as a choice of leaving behind all physicality and transforming their relationship into a purely spiritual one, postponed for "Elysium" but not the

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<sup>133</sup> "Der erste Strahl, der auf ihn fällt, zeigt sein schönes Antlitz, – sie erkennt einen Gott, indem der sie liebt, er wird sie aufwärts tragen, ihre Freude ihre Seligkeit übersteigen alle Grenzen, sie deutet empor, usf [sic], dann geht ihre Freude in kindliches Vergnügen über, sie betastet ihn, seine Flügel, sie will sich zu ihm beugen, ihn zu küssen, die Lampe entstürzt ihren Händen." Letter from Gisela to Joachim, dated spring 1856. Hs-#10472a.

present, perhaps imitating Angelika Kauffmann's relationship with Caroline/Johann Gottfried Herder, is a different question. That would possibly speak to Gisela's acknowledging a debt to Kauffmann, whose words "Glückliche Psyche, traure nicht mehr" fit Kauffmann as much as they fit Gisela, as she is making her decision to disentangle the complicated triangular relationship with Herman and Joachim.

Besides the interesting reversal of images – Joachim's double-bars seem to frame movements of Psyche while Gisela's drawing on the cover features Amor – the context from which each "drawing" emerges seems to symbolize and foreshadow the upcoming change of Joachim and Gisela's relationship in 1857. While Joachim's *music*, above all, reflects a joyful character (Psyche's view of Amor in the lamp scene), Gisela's drawing shows an image often related to a hybrid of "dalliance" and "death." Amor plays the aulos to reawaken Psyche from her deathly sleep. But as Psyche has not been included, Gisela's drawing features an Amor playing for a Psyche no longer there.

## 6. Psychological Music, Improvisation and Joachim's Violin Concerto in G Major WoO

As a violinist in the later nineteenth century Joachim is known to have embraced, together with Clara Schumann and other musicians in Brahms's orbit, an aesthetic determined to the core by the idea of *Werktreue*, which meant *complying with the composer's intentions*. Joachim had an "almost uncanny ability to present composed musical works as though they were being improvised, created on the spot through a mysterious *fusion* of Joachim himself with the mind or spirit of the composer."<sup>1</sup> But as this dissertation has investigated Joachim as a composer, our first question is how, if at all, could this idea be relevant to Joachim as a composer of "psychological music"?

This chapter suggests that one antonym of *Werktreue* – the concept of improvisation – is, indeed, of great aesthetic relevance. It will serve, in different shades, as the overarching unifying idea of this chapter. If Joachim played "composed musical works as though they were being improvised," he played the violin, in fact, the way he composed, or composed, in some respects, as he improvised. The improvisational element as part of Joachim's *compositional* style or syntax is what the music world at large knows Joachim for – what survives in today's concert halls is his contribution of cadenzas to Brahms's, Beethoven's, Mozart's and other violin concertos. Not only in his

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<sup>1</sup> Leistra-Jones, "Virtue and Virtuosity: Brahms, the Concerto, and the Politics of Performance in the Late-Nineteenth Century," 131.

cadenzas but also in his concertos Joachim manifested the talents of his exceptional improvisation-evoking style. No less a figure than, once again, Sir Donald Francis Tovey called Joachim's beautiful ornamental figurations "living melodies."

And if Joachim's performances of his own violin music in public have recently been called "declarations of love"<sup>2</sup> to Gisela, the Violin Concerto in G Major is another such declaration: through his feelings for her, Joachim as a composer transported himself (or was transported) to a state of mind fruitful for composing – a key ingredient of *Psychologische Musik*. Published in 1889 in Gisela's memory *post mortem*, the concerto apparently was conceived in the 1850s, and finished and first performed in 1864, so that it initially commemorated not her death but the end of his romantic relationship with her. Because of its origin in the 1850s and because of its multiple layers of autobiographical meaning, textual allusions, citations, and its proximity to the von Arnim circle, it suggests a tie to "psychological music." As Moser maintains, Joachim could not have written a more poignant "elegy" expressing his sadness. But what Moser, Borchard, and other scholars did not discuss is what Joachim may have revised at which stage and, more important, when in its history the work reached the version published in 1889. We will return to the question of chronology and offer a hypothesis about why it is very likely that the first two movements – of which the second plays on an

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<sup>2</sup> Meyer, "Zum Violinkonzert in einem Satze," 133.



established musical topos rich in meaning and implications – was already part of the work in 1864.

Joachim's skill of composing improvisatory "living melodies" ("as if made up in the moment") also points to "psychological music," which we have yet to discuss and which allows us to see parallels to two contemporaries: Bettine von Arnim and Robert Schumann. We will revisit the first chapter and Joachim's comment about Beethoven and investigate whether there is another, thus far not examined, layer of "psychological music," pertaining to how Joachim composed, betraying some similarities to Schumann. And although Joachim insisted, as we shall see, that his compositional approach differed from Schumann's, some evidence suggests that there are certain parallels in outlook that are crucial for situating "psychological music" in its time and to show that it was, in some respects, not a singular phenomenon.

In the first chapter we connected Joachim's "psychological music" to contemporary philosophical discussions of "Willkür," as he could have understood it in the context of Göttingen in 1853. "Willkür" was tied to fatalism and the subjection of *all* matters to an "outside force," including Joachim's emotions, or "Empfindungen," which are, after all, what he aimed to "detect and save from the abyss." Without in any way rejecting the notion of fatalism from Ch. 1, in this chapter we shall revisit the concept of "Willkür" to explore another angle of "psychological music," which anchors it firmly in

a romantic aesthetic. It turns out that Joachim's *Psychologische Musik* in some of its elements may not be as singular a phenomenon as his "fatalism of the emotions" might have seemed to make it.<sup>3</sup> We shall take "Willkür" in one of its negative forms, as "Unwillkürlichkeit," while keeping in mind that according to Joachim the ideal music – Beethoven – negates "Willkür" ("aber es ist nicht Willkür, one actually feels that it [the theme] had experienced everything with the master, that it had been his constant friend and companion. Hence the sympathetic effect – I would like to be able to write a psychology of tones...."). What is more, there is another understanding of "Willkür" or, rather, "Unwillkür" ("Nicht-Willkür")<sup>4</sup> which is its definition of composing almost involuntarily, in an unwanted ("ungewollt") manner. Indeed, the German dictionary Duden defines one "unwillkürlich" in one sense as "happening completely by itself, without one's desire, for example like an involuntary reaction, such as having an

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<sup>3</sup> Ulrich Tadday's clarification of Schumann's aesthetic and his understanding of "romantic" applies to Joachim as well: "Schumann can be termed romantic, but not in the idealistic sense of early romanticism, and certainly not at all in the formal sense of absolute music. For Schumann's aesthetic is, historically considered, not separated from affects, emotions, feelings, texts or functions." ([...] "romantisch zu nennen, aber nicht im idealistischen Sinne der Frühromantik und schon gar nicht im formalistischen Sinne der Idee der absoluten Musik. Denn Schumanns Musik und Ästhetik ist, geschichtlich betrachtet, nicht losgelöst von Affekten, Emotionen, Gefühlen, Texten oder Funktionen zu verstehen.") Ulrich Tadday, "Zur Musikästhetik Robert Schumanns," in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2006), 135.

<sup>4</sup> Although today the word "Unwillkürlichkeit" is preferred, "Unwillkür" appears in the *Deutsches Wörterbuch der Gebrüder Grimm*, as negating "Willkür," like "Nicht-Willkür."

impulse to laugh.”<sup>5</sup> While this definition may not be applicable at face value, it surely helps us to see that “psychological music” has, as one of its layers or registers, precisely this notion of involuntary inspiration and creation. Departing from the first chapter, we will see the “determined” element in Joachim’s “psychological music” not as mere emotion/*Empfindung*/feeling but “*Empfindung*” in the sense of also meaning “the perception of a definite sensory quality: a tone, a color,” wherein it differs, according to Hanslick, from “*Gefühl*,” which is “becoming conscious of an advancement or inhibition of our soul-state, therefore of a sense of well-being or lack of pleasure.”<sup>6</sup> To analyze Joachim’s psyche in depth admittedly is impossible, but his many assertions

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<sup>5</sup> *Duden Dictionary* ([www.duden.de](http://www.duden.de)) offers a modern translation of “unwillkürlich,” which reads: “Not arbitrary, but rather entirely by itself, without one willing it. Examples: an involuntary reaction or movement – to have to laugh involuntarily.” (“... nicht willkürlich, sondern ganz von selbst geschehend, ohne dass man es will. Beispiele: eine unwillkürliche Reaktion, Bewegung; unwillkürlich lachen müssen.”) That “Unwillkür” had a similar meaning as “involuntary,” or not by choice, in the early to mid-nineteenth century is confirmed in the *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jakob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, entry “Unwillkür”: “in academic language – involuntary movements” (“in der Sprache der Wissenschaft: unwillkürliche Bewegungen.”) Furthermore, the term “Unwillkür” does appear in relation to music in Joachim’s circle of the 1850s, as confirmed by its usage in Bettine von Arnim’s *Die Günderode* (Grünberg und Leipzig: W. Levysohn, 1840), which is another partly fictional record of Bettine’s correspondence with her friend, Karoline von Günderode (1780-1806), *Die Günderode*, II:13: “musical thoughts are involuntary, they manifest themselves in the sensual stirrings of the soul.” (“Aller Geist ist sinnenbewegter Leib des Geistigen ist also auch Musik, drum sind Gedanken in der Musik unwillkührliche, sie erzeugen sich in dieser Sinnenregung der Seele.”)

<sup>6</sup> “[*Empfindung* bedeutet] das Wahrnehmen einer bestimmten Sinnesqualität: eines Tons, einer Farbe [und unterscheidet sich vom *Gefühl*, dem] Bewußtwerden einer Förderung oder Hemmung unseres Seelenzustandes, also eines Wohlseins oder Missbehagens.” Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1865), 4.

that Gisela revived his warmth of “Empfindung” by stimulating his composition, and his analogies of “Gisela und Beethoven” and his claim that “your letters are nascent overtures for me” (“Deine Briefe sind mir kommende Ouvertüren”) betray that what was “bred in the warmth of emotion (“Empfindung”) may also have had to do with musical “Empfindung.” Because Gisela was so intimately part of Joachim’s composing, it remains impossible to separate all the nuances and ways in which “psychological music” worked. But clearly, it constituted an emotional autobiographical approach, centered on inspiration through Gisela, which in the end was about tones.

In discussing Schumann’s (and, in the second section Bettine’s) ideas about composing in connection with Joachim’s “psychological music,” we will use the familiar dichotomy of “Einfall” (inspiration/idea) and “Ausarbeitung” (working out)<sup>7</sup> that has been applied to Schumann’s compositional process. We should add that in an era glorifying the romantic genius, however, these two moments in a compositional process are not always what they seem to be in a composer’s letters; also, exactly where “Einfall” and “Ausarbeitung” begin and end, and where they overlap, is not always clear. But the general division between the terms remains useful. While the initial invention is often

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<sup>7</sup> Bernhard R. Appel, “Poesie und Handwerk: Robert Schumanns Schaffensweise,” in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2006), 165.

seen as a “Gnadengeschenk” (gracious gift),<sup>8</sup> “Ausarbeitung” is more pragmatic and demands, as one Schumann scholar notes, “indispensable knowledge of craft, composition, counterpoint, and accomplishment in instrumentation.”<sup>9</sup>

However, the idea that inspiration happens from somewhere beyond the individual’s will and control and that all the composer does is to notate music is a conception of creativity and inspiration associated, among others, with Mozart, but it is also stereotypical of romanticism; it views the (“Einfall”) as “composing” and the “rest” as “secondary,” as “merely documenting the mentally finished composition.”<sup>10</sup> Schumann scholar Bernhard Appel rightly has called this concept a “self-deceiving topos.”<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, it is more often encountered in the accounts of young composers.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Appel, “Poesie und Handwerk: Robert Schumanns Schaffensweise,” 64.

<sup>9</sup> “Unabdingbares Handwerkswissen – Satzlehre, Kontrapunkt, und Fertigkeiten in der Instrumentation.” Ibid., 165.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>12</sup> A letter from the nineteen-year-old Schumann to Friedrich Wieck elaborates this idea: “But if you knew how it urges in me and presses and how with my symphonies I could have already reached Op. 100, if I had written them down.” (“Aber wüßten Sie, wie es in mir drängt und treibt und wie ich in meinen Sinfonien schon bis zu op. 100 gekommen sein könnte, hätte ich sie aufgeschrieben.”) Also later, Schumann would make a clear distinction between the effortless nature of the “Einfall” (“Composition [discovery] comes easily and quickly – but in what follows I

The working-out process of the “Einfall” in Joachim’s compositional approach, for one, hardly happened “by itself,” if we judge by his letters about his struggles with the craft,<sup>13</sup> which may have contributed to Joachim’s sadly short compositional career in the 1850s. But our goal is not to divest “psychological music” from its idealistic and romantic notions – which are not foreign to the idea that inspiration comes from *Empfindungen* of musical and “other” natures (including the emotions) that the composer detects and writes down – but rather to understand that the twenty-two year-old composer’s approach shadowed some of the same concepts we find in Schumann’s and Bettine’s creative approaches. Joachim’s “psychological music” – as understood by him – in the end appears to be much more *literally* inspired by a creative source of inspiration (called Gisela) than is imaginable in Schumann’s or Bettine von Arnim’s romantic

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always begin to prefer artifices of all kinds for working out materials, that can bring me to despair” (“Das Componiren [Erfinden] geht leicht und schnell – aber in der Folge fang’ ich damit immer allerhand Künste beim [Ausarbeiten] vorzunehmen an, die mich zur Verzweiflung bringen können.”) Appel, 164, cites Schumann *Jugendbriefe von Robert Schumann. Nach den Originalen mitgetheilt von Clara Schumann*, 181, letter of June 3, 1832.

<sup>13</sup> Especially in 1856 and 1857 Joachim’s letters increasingly speak of frustration, although not always for clear reasons. In one letter to Heinrich Joachim of November 16, 1857 it is the “Stimmung” that made it difficult for him to compose: “In the recent time I have played violin more than I have composed. The mood for it was lacking entirely, and I want to hope that it [Stimmung] will not let me wait for it too long.” (“...Ich habe in letzter Zeit mehr gezeigt als componirt. Es fehlte mir alle Stimmung dazu, und ich will hoffen, dass sie nicht zu lange auf sich warten lässt.”) Manuscript letter 1991.2.57.6, Brahms Institute, Lübeck.

compositional approaches (although they also relied on a respective significant person who “transported” them to fruitful states of inspiration).

Proceeding backwards, we begin by examining where Schumann’s and Joachim’s compositional approaches do converge. Then we turn to Bettine von Arnim to investigate where Joachim’s “psychological music” meets her ideas of composing-improvising. Finally, we consider Gisela von Arnim and Joachim’s Violin Concerto in G Major to analyze not only the ornamental “improvisatory” syntax – which stylistically has to do with the idea of improvisation – but also to investigate Joachim’s choice of a moving pre-existing musical topos for his second movement – which includes allusions to Gis-E-[L]A. What holds this chapter together is the Violin Concerto, which draws significantly on musical references to Bettine von Arnim and Schumann, two figures who may have had also a more general impact on Joachim’s compositional approach.

## **6.1 Schumann, “Unwillkürlichkeit,” and Psychological Music**

We have noted in Ch. 1 that Joachim’s “psychological music” paralleled contemporary developments in psychology. In this chapter we shall turn to the profoundly romantic notion of composing in one’s head with some degree of “Unwillkürlichkeit” and “merely writing down” the composition – which, in Dana Gooley’s view, would have represented for Schumann an ideal, “a sign of maturity – a

refining of concentration,<sup>14</sup> compositional oversight, and contemplative depth.”<sup>15</sup> More so than composing at the piano, relying on one’s imagination would “guarantee a more direct transfer of spirit or fantasy to composition.”<sup>16</sup>

Schumann advised another young composer in 1852 with the words “accustom yourself ... to conceiving music freely in your imagination, without the help of the piano” in order to gain “greater clarity and purity.”<sup>17</sup> Quite plausibly he also shared this tip with Joachim when they were in close contact later the same year. In Joachim’s

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<sup>14</sup> In both composers’ thoughts, one way of “disciplining” the compositional approach in the mind – presumably to strengthen the “direct transfer” – was to practice counterpoint, which in Schumann’s case preceded his new (and purely mind-located) compositional approach, while in Joachim’s case the before and after was less distinct – his psychological approach began in the early 1850s, while his counterpoint exchange with Brahms occurred in 1856 and 1857.

<sup>15</sup> Dana Gooley, “Schumann and Agencies of Improvisation,” in *Rethinking Schumann*, ed. Roemin Kok and Laura Tunbridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 130. Also see Appel, 156-157: “The mature Schumann pleaded only for mental composition. In the *Musikalischen Haus- und Lebensregeln* formulated in 1848 one reads: ‘If you begin to compose, do it all in the head. Only when you have a piece completely finished try it out on an instrument. If your music comes from within, if you feel it, it will have a similar effect on others.’” (“Der reife Schumann plädiert nur noch für das mentale Komponieren. In den 1848 formulierten *Musikalischen Haus- und Lebensregeln* heisst es: ‘Fängst du an zu componiren, so mache alles im Kopf. Erst wenn du ein Stück ganz fertig hast, probire es am Instrumente. Kam dir deine Musik aus dem Innern, empfandest du sie, so wird sie auch so auf Andere wirken.’”) Appel, 157 cites rule No. 56, cited in Gerd Nauhaus, “Schumann und Carl Reinecke,” in *Schumann Forschungen 7. “Neue Bahnen.” Robert Schumann und seine musikalischen Zeitgenossen*, ed. Bernhard R. Appel (Mainz: Schott, 2002), 55.

<sup>16</sup> Gooley, 130. As a side note, it is not our aim to suggest a value judgment about various compositional approaches. The greatest composers possess many different ways of working at, and apart from, an instrument.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Schumann, *Briefe, Neue Folge*, 356, entry of May 10, 1852.



letters, to be sure, accounts about composing mentally surface in 1853, when he was working on *Demetrius*.<sup>18</sup> Just before completing the overture and while working simultaneously on his Overture to *Henry IV* (Op. 7), Joachim wrote to Liszt: “Mentally both overtures are finished, and much of the former is on paper.”<sup>19</sup> This, however, does not rule out that fantasizing at the piano may have been part of the earlier stages of conceiving his music.

In September 1853 Joachim wrote a frank account about Schumann’s personality and composing that promotes the concept of creating “unwillkürlich” as the ideal. Joachim noted that “[Schumann composes in a manner] as nature dictates to him, [suggesting] [...] that he cannot otherwise.” On the other hand, Joachim mentioned something ambiguous – that Schumann’s approach worked only for composers as “rich”

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<sup>18</sup> “You do not know the bliss, if the turmoil of passions and waves of music meet in the heart, and if the head sees crystallized columns of sounds shooting up – they pile up, set themselves in tubes next to each other, always larger – and finally become a deafening organ. Now it bubbles and ferments ever so powerfully: [Demetrius motive, see Ch. 3, Ex. 63, p. 198] I hear it continually.” (“Du kennst nicht die Seligkeit, wenn sich das Leidenschaftengebraus und Musikgewoge im Herzen begegnen, und wenn dann der Kopf krystallisirte Tonsäulen anschließen sieht; die häufen sich, stellen sich in Röhren nebeneinander auf, immer größere – und zuletzt wirds eine tönende Orgel. Jetzt brausts und gährts aber noch mächtig: [Demetrius motive Ch. 3, Ex. 63, p. 198] höre ich immerfort.”) *Joachim Briefe* I:116, letter to Gisela of December 3-4, 1853.

<sup>19</sup> “I have to find time to finish writing the *Demetrius* and *Prince Henry* Overtures. They are both mentally finished, much of the former is on paper.” (“Ich muß Zeit gewinnen die Ouvertüren zum *Demetrius* und *Prinz Heinz* fertig zu schreiben. Im Kopf sind beide vollendet; erstere auch zum großen Teil auf dem Papier.”) *Joachim Briefe*, I:142, letter to Franz Liszt of January 1854.

as Schumann while it would be a mistake for those whose inner life was not as rich to compose in this manner:

Formerly I did not know Schumann's personality intimately at all, though this is necessary if one should judge by something other than by a temporarily inspired view of the entire richness of his soul, that formerly spoke as Florestan and Eusebius. You are right – there is nothing of a burgrave in him, but naturally the constant intoning of his soul causes him to fail hearing many a thing [manches "überhören"] around him, for that one can only adore him all the more. He is the only one of present composers through whom the same stream of music stirs him in waves as in Beethoven and Schubert; he sings, as his nature inspires him, and has the courage to say to all: I can do no other [a quotation by Luther: "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir, Amen"]; he alone may do it – whoever was not so richly endowed and wished to do it, for him virtue would turn into error.<sup>20</sup>

A certain attraction to what Gooley calls the "mature" way of composing – which certainly represented Joachim's ideal (how achievable he thought it was for him is a different matter) – emanates from this letter, but so does doubt ("er [Schumann] *allein* darf es aber auch [but nobody else is privileged to compose 'wie die Nature es

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<sup>20</sup> "Schumanns Persönlichkeit kannte ich früher gar nicht näher, und doch ist dies nötig, wenn man durch etwas anderes als durch seinen zeitweilig begeisterten Blick auf den ganzen Reichthum seiner Seele, die sich früher als Florestan und Eusebius aussprach, schließen soll. Du hast recht; es ist kein Burggrafenthum in dem Mann, aber es ist natürlich, daß er bei dem beständigen Tönen seiner Seele, manches um ihn überhört: man kann ihn nur darum mehr verehren. Er ist unter den Componisten der Gegenwart der Einzige, durch den derselbe Musikstrom seine Wogen stürzt wie bei Beethoven und Schubert; er singt, *wie seine Natur es ihm eingibt*, und hat den Muth allen zu sagen: *ich kann nicht anders*; er allein darf es aber auch: wer nicht so reich wäre und es thun wollte, bei dem würde die Tugend zum Fehler –." *Joachim Briefe*, I:70-72, letter to Woldemar Bargiel of September 3, 1853.

eingibt'']"). Could it be that the young composer Joachim, who was, as we have learned throughout this dissertation, deeply inclined to an inspiration-based practice of composing ("detecting" the *Empfindungen* and "saving them from the abyss"), did not feel as naturally inclined to a more "mature" style of "composing in his mind" or to other "mature" compositional practices like counterpoint, which he nevertheless aimed to embrace, following the model of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and from 1856 Brahms? And could it be that Joachim's desire to discipline his compositional mind by re-evaluating his [youthful] approach turned out to be an obstacle for his long-term compositional creativity?

That Joachim in the 1850s, unlike Schumann, had a proclivity for composing and fantasizing *at the piano* – which perhaps stimulated his musical "Empfindungen" – is clarified in a letter he addressed to his friend Woldemar Bargiel in 1853.

Dear Bargiel, Just this moment coming out of a rehearsal for tomorrow's concert, I find your lines and also answer at the moment, although tired from conducting and with stiffened hands, so that you can see how dear for me every memory of you is. The last months I have led here a veritable hermit life, almost without company, and actually there have been hours in which I thought it must continue so forever. You are a musician, and with all your beautiful humility in life you are an artist in all the splendid meaning of the word! I'm pleased to think that we sympathize about many things, for example, among them that you, like me, often fantasizing in the mornings at the piano, forget to compose while composing; should you never have times like my first time in Hanover, in which one would most preferably sit as a spirit in some kind of Aeolian harp, unseen by the entire world, unperceived, sounding only in the turmoil and storming of the

outside world? [The Aeolian harp sounds only in a storm!<sup>21</sup>]. Please excuse that I use this paper for a while as a program-note confession about my inner life.<sup>22</sup> One should never communicate that to another person; but this time I thought it necessary, as I feared that you would be able to believe me as capable of the most shameful ingratitude toward men whom I respect and honor the most among all whom I know about. Six days ago I already wrote Frau von Arnim without yet hearing from her; likely since then you have not been in her house “unter den Zelten [Gisela’s address in Berlin].”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Aeolian harp,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095353623> (accessed on May 19, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> “Komödien-Zettel,” also known as “Theater-Zettel” refers to the piece of paper an audience member would receive in the theater, containing the information about who was acting, which character etc. See “Komödienzettel bis komplet” (Bd. 11, Sp. 1684 bis 1685), in *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm*, 16 vols. in 32 part-vols. (Leipzig 1854-1961), <http://woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB/> (accessed on May 9, 2014).

<sup>23</sup> “Lieber Bargiel,  
Den Augenblick komme ich aus einer Probe für's morgige Concert, finde Ihre Zeilen, und antworte auch im Augenblick, obgleich dirigir-müde und steif an Händen, nur damit Sie sehen, wie lieb mir jede Erinnerung an Sie ist. Ich habe hier die letzten Monate ein wahres Einsiedler-Leben geführt, fast ohne jeden Verkehr; und es gab wirklich Stunden, in denen ich meinte, es müsse ewig so fort dauern. Sie sind Musiker, bei aller Ihrer schönen Demuth im Leben Künstler in der ganzen, stolzen Wortbedeutung! Es freut mich also zu denken, daß wir in manchen Dingen sympathisiren, z. B. darin, daß Sie, wie ich, oft Morgens am Klavier phantasirend, über dem Komponiren zu componiren vergessen; sollten Sie da nie eine ähnliche Zeit verlebt haben, wie meine erste in Hannover, in der man am liebsten als Geist in irgend einer Aeolsharfe säße, ungesehen von aller Welt, unvernommen, außer wenn's auch draußen braust und stürmt? — Verzeihen Sie, daß ich das Papier da eine Weile zum Komödien-Zettel meines Innern mache. Man sollte so etwas nie einem Zweiten mittheilen; ich hab's aber dies mal für nöthig gehalten, weil ich fürchtete, daß Sie mich sonst des schändlichsten Undanks gegen Menschen für fähig glauben könnten, die ich am höchsten unter allen, die ich bis jetzt kennen gelernt habe, achte und verehere; vor ungefähr 6 Tagen habe ich bereits an Frau von Arnim geschrieben, ohne bis jetzt wieder von ihr gehört zu haben; wahrscheinlich waren Sie seitdem nicht im Hause unter den Zelten.” *Joachim Briefe*, I:38, letter to Bargiel of February 4, 1853.

On the most general level Joachim's admission that composing meant fantasizing at the piano was reminiscent of Schumann's approach in the 1830s –when Schumann's rhetoric drew so heavily on improvisational post-classical pianism. But on second consideration it appears that when improvising at the piano Joachim reached some sort of blissful state – perhaps not dissimilar from the idea of music written "ohne Willkür" (or "unwillkürlich"), which he so admired in Beethoven and Schumann. To be lost in improvisation meant in short to "forget" that he was composing. His account of improvising sounds as if it would have accorded with his ideal, albeit originating not away from an instrument but at a piano.

Although the two composers' approaches, as Joachim acknowledged, differed – the young Joachim relates perhaps closer to the young Schumann of the 1830s – we can see a general parallel between Joachim's aesthetic in the first movement of the Violin Concerto in G major, which aims to pass "as if improvised" and Schumann's position between "music finished in a composed-out form and improvised music, in its process of production communicated as unfinished,"<sup>24</sup> as our analysis of Joachim's first movements will further clarify.

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<sup>24</sup> "... [einer in] auskomponierten Form fertiggestellten und einer improvisierten, als Herstellungsprozess mitgeteilten unfertigen Musik." Peter Gülke, "Robert Schumanns jubelnd erlittene Romantik," in *Schumann Handbuch*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2006), 17.

Joachim admired Schumann so much that an intense exchange of ideas would have taken place in person whenever they saw each other, possibly about “psychological music.” As Tadday said, Schumann never left a doubt that he understood music as “the poetic expression of ‘more special states of feelings’ or of different ‘soul states.’ For Schumann’s music aesthetic foundation, there is much evidence that ‘music [was the] philosophy of feelings’.”<sup>25</sup>

For Joachim, the transfer of experience to music was less general and more specific. Joachim did not search for a “poetic” expression of the “prosaic” outer world. In Schumann’s writing it becomes clear that he subscribed to some definition of “poetic realism”<sup>26</sup> by which his music was a “poetic” rendition of the “prosaic Aussenwelt,” – which included “events in my soul, thoughts about music and compositions [...] everything that goes on in the world, politics, literature, mankind – I brood about everything in my manner, which then wants to vent through music and search for an

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<sup>25</sup> “Poetischen Ausdruck von ‘spezielleren Gefühlszuständen’ oder verschiedenen ‘Seelenzuständen.’ Für Schumanns musikästhetischen Grundsatz, dass ‘Musik Philosophie des Gemüthes’ sei, gibt es viele Belege.” Tadday, 133, cites Martin Kreisig, ed. *Robert Schumann: Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914), I:366 and *ibid.*, cites Hermann Erler, ed. *Robert Schumann’s Leben. Aus seinen Briefen geschildert*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Ries und Erler, 1887), I:128.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

escape,”<sup>27</sup> as he shared with Clara in 1838. While clearly using composing as an outlet, Joachim was much more exclusive in what he viewed as influencing his composing (certainly it did not encapsulate “Alles was in der Welt vorgeht”). But that Clara was for Schumann in many ways what Gisela was for Joachim – a profound source of inspiration – is beyond doubt.

Schumann may have also left more directly traceable influences on Joachim’s Violin Concerto in G Major, specifically in the finale. First, Joachim’s opening theme impresses as a reminiscence/paraphrase of the opening theme from the finale of his friend’s Piano Trio Op. 110, fittingly in the same key (see Exx. 84 and 85).

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<sup>27</sup> “Vorgänge in meiner Seele, Gedanken über Musik und Compositionen [...] Alles was in der Welt vorgeht, Politik, Literatur, Menschen – über Alles denke ich in meiner Weise nach, was sich dann durch Musik Luft machen, einen Ausweg suchen will.” Ibid., he cites *Clara und Robert Schumann: Briefwechsel. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Eva Weissweiler, 3 vols. (Frankfurt: Stroemfeld, 2001), I:146, letter to Clara of April 15, 1838.

**Kräftig, mit Humor**

**Kräftig, mit Humor**

*Mit Pedal*

**Example 84, Schumann, Piano Trio in G Major Op. 110, Third Movement  
(mm. 1-4)**

B - G - C

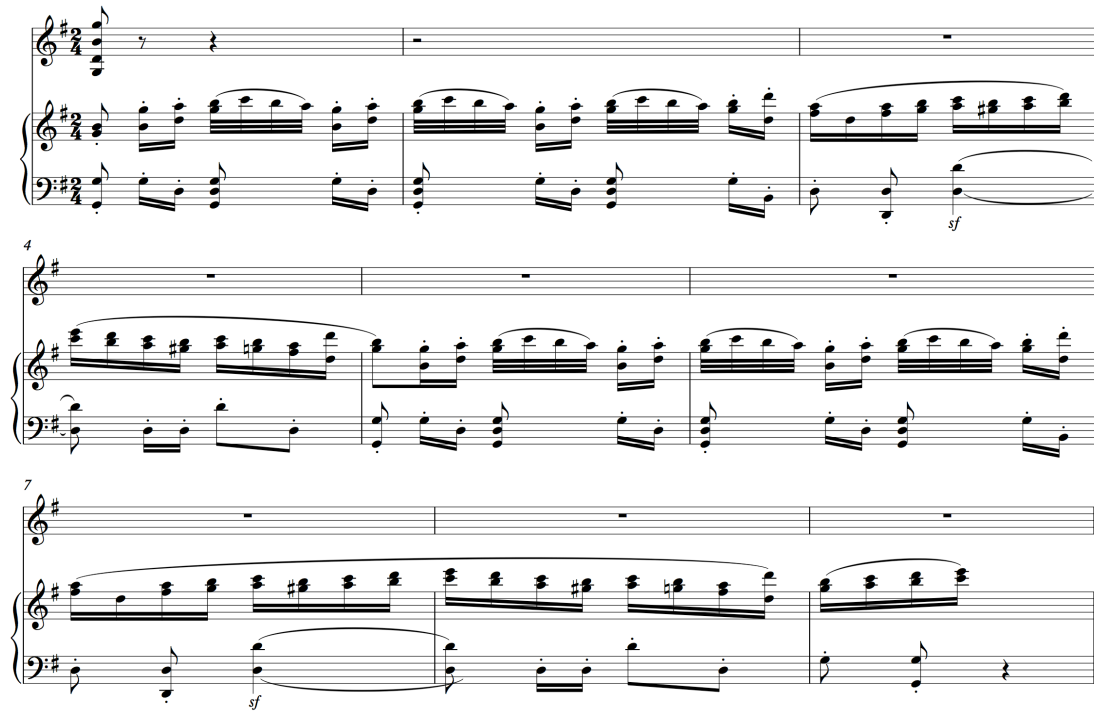
*Solo*

**Example 85, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Third Movement,  
First Solo (mm. 7-9)**

And, second, a bit further into the movement, Joachim seems to allude to the first movement of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor Op. 54. At corresponding



moments of orchestral tutti interjections, both composers rely on an ebullient, sweeping passage, which describes a similar melodic outline (see Exx. 86 and 87).



Example 86, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Third Movement  
(mm. 49-57)

The passage also appears in the solo violin in D major, in mm. 27-34 and at the end (Ex. 87, mm. 391-395), where the solo violin adds decorative and challenging trills, almost as if, in effect, improvising on the Schumann source.



Example 87, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Third Movement  
(mm. 391-395)

In comparison, Schumann's Piano Concerto introduces the following passage shortly after the presentation of the first theme. It is heard first in the piano (mm. 32, 36), then in the full tutti (m. 42, see Ex. 88).



**Example 88, Schumann, Piano Concerto in A Minor Op. 54, First Movement (mm. 42-45)**

Completed in 1845, and premiered in Dresden (directed by Ferdinand Hiller) in December 1845, and in Leipzig (directed by Mendelssohn) in January 1846, Schumann's masterpiece conceivably could have been heard by the young Joachim listening to Clara as the soloist,<sup>28</sup> although no evidence survives.

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<sup>28</sup> Schumann was in touch with Joachim in November 1845, when Clara was unwell and Robert in need of a substitute for an *Abonnement Concert* in Leipzig. Joachim eventually substituted for her on November 11, with Ferdinand David's *Variationen über Schuberts Lob der Thränen für Violine mit Orchester* Op. 15, and gave the Dresden premiere of Mendelssohn's new Violin Concerto Op. 64. See *Robert Schumanns Briefe, Neue Folge*, 253. Also, *Schumann Briefedition*, (7 vols.), ed. Thomas Synofzik and Michael Heinemann (Köln, 2009), I: 242-243; also see Robert Eshbach, Schumann as Mentor: Joseph Joachim's "Blick auf Schumann," *Die Tonkunst* 4, No. 3 (Juli 2010): 352.

## 6.2 Of “Life-Melodies” and “Living Melodies”: Joachim and Bettine von Arnim

Bettine von Arnim’s influence on Joachim has received relatively little scholarly attention, although she may have had an impact on Joachim’s beliefs concerning “psychological music.” What Bettine calls her “life melodies” could have to do at least in part with the “involuntary” (“unwillkürlich”) compositional approach, which elicited Joachim’s “living melodies” (Tovey). Not only Bettine’s ideas but also her own music left a considerable impact on Joachim’s oeuvre. If both the Violin Concerto “in one movement” No. 1 (“in einem Satze”) and the *Hungarian* Violin Concerto No. 2 (“in ungarischer Weise”) have their characteristic tone, one pertaining to form, the other to national idiom, the Violin Concerto in G Major WoO begins by quoting a Lied from Bettine, which determines the first movement’s tender tone and opens up a world of associations. Furthermore, the song quotation can be contextualized in a reading of the concerto, which offers an alternative to the “‘classicist’ transparency” stressed in recent research.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, from a musical perspective Joachim’s compositional syntax promotes the aesthetic we have noted in *Versuch eines Tanzes* – moving slightly away from the harmonic harshness and formal innovation of the *Demetrius* Overture – while an examination of the song/text/cipher allusions of this concerto reveals Joachim’s

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<sup>29</sup> Meyer, “Zum Violinkonzert in einem Satz,” 135.

idiosyncratic aesthetic, which is never devoid of subtle textual hints that are tightly braided into the music, albeit partly concealed.

Beginning with a brief reflection on Bettine's ideas that might share aesthetic features with "psychological music," we can note in her letters a particular attitude toward songs and melodies, and how they came into existence. In some ways reminiscent of the youthful Schumann, Bettine perceived the initial idea – "Einfall" – as diametrically opposed to the difficulties she encountered in the process entailed in putting a song together. Working-out her initial idea was apparently difficult enough to occupy her literary mind as an author; she wrote about her compositional experience in her fictional works, regretting, as it seems, the lack of compositional training in her youth. At the same time, the approach she routinely applied betrays a notion of "dilettante naiveté," different from, but nevertheless related to, the underlying romantic beliefs of Schumann and Joachim. That receiving musical ideas is to some extent a passive process and that the only *active* task of the composer remained their documentation is as fascinating as Bettine's conviction that her lack of training was especially conducive to allowing herself to be a medium for compositional inspiration.

As is well documented, Bettine was the one who first attracted – and culturally perhaps even adopted – Joachim into the von Arnim circle, and she shared with Joachim

a great passion for Beethoven.<sup>30</sup> Among her musical acquaintances, furthermore, were Liszt<sup>31</sup> and the Schumanns. What is less known is that Joachim's interest in her songs can be documented as early as the 1850s, and that he even edited some of her work.<sup>32</sup> According to Borchard he began composing the Violin Concerto as early as 1854,<sup>33</sup> when he and Bettine frequently saw each other. Presumably Joachim encountered then her "Lied des Schülers," the song used in the Violin Concerto. In 1857 Joachim surely had the opportunity to familiarize himself with her music. He was considering preparing an edition of her songs but decided against it, as a letter of 1857 reveals.<sup>34</sup>

Bettine von Arnim received her musical training around 1810.<sup>35</sup> Her songs display a stylistic proximity to the folk-song-inspired Second Berlin Song School.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ann Willison, "Bettina Brentano-von Arnim: The Unknown Musician," in *Bettina Brentano-von Arnim. Gender and Politics*, ed. Elke P. Frederiksen and Katherine R. Goodman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 318. (hereinafter "The Unknown Musician").

<sup>31</sup> Willison, 334.

<sup>32</sup> Renate Moering, ed. *Bettine von Arnim (1785-1859). Lieder und Duette für Singstimme und Klavier. Handschriften, Drucke, Bearbeitungen* (Kassel, Furore, 1996), 34, 36, 61, 69, 79.

<sup>33</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, accompanying CD-R.

<sup>34</sup> As Moering (80, fn. 182) explains, the letter in which Joachim declined to edit Bettine's songs was addressed to an anonymous recipient (possibly Count Flemming, presumably a musical friend of the von Arnim family). The letter is cited (see *Ibid.*) in a catalogue, collection Max Reis, at the Basel Erasmushaus, Haus der Bücher AG, auction 67 on October 8, 1994, catalogue 657 (Berlin: Stargardt Autographenhandlung, 62).

Among her compositions are twelve songs for voice and piano,<sup>37</sup> published during her lifetime under the synonym “Beans Beor.”<sup>38</sup> But among her unpublished manuscripts and sketches are another fifty songs,<sup>39</sup> giving us an idea of the significance composing had for her, particularly the genre of Lied.

Bettine von Arnim’s songs and the “Lied des Schülers” is no exception have been edited heavily – in part because of her admitted difficulty in developing, working out, and harmonizing her initial ideas and inspirations.<sup>40</sup> Some songs were notated just as a one-voice melody with text,<sup>41</sup> and then subsequently harmonized (and published), but often with someone’s help. Ms. 9b from the “Heineman collection” at the Pierpont

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<sup>35</sup> Renate Moering, “Bettine’s Liedvertonungen,” in *“Der Geist muß Freiheit genießen...!” Bettine von Arnim – Studien 2*, ed. Walter Schmitz and Sibylle von Steinsdorff (Berlin: Saint Albin, 1989), 67-75.

<sup>36</sup> Willison, “The Unknown Musician,” 308.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 316-317.

<sup>41</sup> Ann Willison, “Bettine’s Kompositionen. Zu einem Notenheft der Sammlung Heineman,” in *Internationales Jahrbuch der Bettina von Arnim Gesellschaft 3*, ed. Uwe Lemm (Berlin: 1989), 185. (hereinafter “Bettine’s Kompositionen”)

Morgan Library is a case in point, as one scholar noted: it shows, on p. 12, a sketch to “Lied des Schülers” that contains just the text and the melody,<sup>42</sup> pointing to the secondary role of harmonization. In an unusual compositional process, Bettine typically wrote down the words of her songs first, and then, as the next step, notated the pitches of the melody to match the words of her text. Perhaps this is why bar lines and even the most basic features, such as the meter, are missing in some sketches.<sup>43</sup> At this stage of composition she abandoned many of her sketches. But what is striking, especially for our discussion of “psychological music,” is how she apprehended the melody in the first place. On the basis of an already chosen text (the order of text, then music seems to have prevailed) Bettine’s approach to composing a melody involved a certain channeling of her “Empfindungen” stimulated by the text, which subsequently “yielded” the melody, as if “dictated” from an outside source: “Rather than mastering the music, she wanted to

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 185.

<sup>43</sup> “In her haste to get her ideas out on paper, she wrote only the clef and key signature on the first line, and omitted the time signature and bar lines.” Willison about a sketch of Bettine von Arnim’s “Wandrer’s Nachtlid,” “The Unknown Musician,” 309; also Renate Moering (in Moering, ed., *Bettine von Arnim (1785-1859). Lieder und Duette für Singstimme und Klavier*) expresses this notion: “Bettines Notenskizzen lassen vermuten, daß sie oft die Worte zunächst notierte und dann die Melodie darüber schrieb, wobei Tonart, Takt und Rhythmus nur angedeutet sind, dem kritischen Auge also als fehlerhaft erscheinen. Im *Frühlingskranz* kommt sie [Bettine] auf diese Eigenart zu sprechen,” Moering, 53, cites Clemens Brentano, *Frühlingskranz*, vol. 30 in *Frankfurter Brentano Ausgabe*, ed. Lieselotte Kinskofer (1844, 1<sup>st</sup> ed; Frankfurt, 1990), 172.

be mastered by it,"<sup>44</sup> as Willison points out. Bettine wrote: "I have no desire to become a master, I wish to allow myself to be mastered by these floods of music, which may be of no value to other ears; it doesn't matter, they converse with me and speak full chords *of life* to me, which I recognize as uniting me with nature."<sup>45</sup> Tellingly, Bettine seems to imply that because of the slight "lack of technical skill"<sup>46</sup> (or, as a reviewer said less favorably, "dilettante" [skill]<sup>47</sup>), she was in a state of "innocent creativity" and thus in a position to allow inspiration to "take over" the way it presumably did.

One letter written shortly before Goethe's death in March 1832 describes how Bettine was inspired by one of his poems – she set many to music – and how she subsequently "attempted to capture [its] feeling in music":<sup>48</sup> "Truly today as then I still draw from you all my energy for living; as then, the song of your poetry tempers and

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<sup>44</sup> Willison, "The Unknown Musician," 319.

<sup>45</sup> "Ich mag nicht Meister werden, ich will mich nicht bemeistern lassen von diesen Musikfluten, von denen ich nicht weiß, ob sie Wert haben können für ein ander Ohr, das schadet nicht, sie reden mit mir und sagen mir volle Lebensakkorde, die ich erkenne als eins mich machend mit der Natur," Willison, "The Unknown Musician," 319, cites Bettine von Arnim, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. Walter Schmitz and Sibylle von Steinsdorff, 3 vols. (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker, 2004), I:482-483 [my italics].

<sup>46</sup> Willison, "The Unknown Musician," 319.

<sup>47</sup> *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* No. 6 (February 8, 1843).

<sup>48</sup> Willison, "The Unknown Musician," 315.



strengthens my spiritual impulses [...] Then I concentrate my thoughts at the piano and compose any one of your poems whose rhythm corresponds to that of my feelings.”<sup>49</sup> Because, as Willison argues, “the musicality of the poem [...] had to correspond to her feelings in order to inspire a song within her,”<sup>50</sup> she was exceedingly reluctant to substitute different texts for the melodic line she had written in response to a specific text. Furthermore, we may note not only that the text provoked the music but also that Goethe played a role as initiating the inspiration, much as we witnessed Gisela’s role in “psychological music.” In sum, Bettine believed that “the text and melody were bound together in the song’s creation,”<sup>51</sup> commemorating the very moment, which elicited the creative impulse and the source of inspiration – here Goethe.

Achim von Arnim’s letters as well divulge information about Bettine’s compositional process—that she regarded her “Einfall” as something truly “involuntary” (“unwillkürlich”). After sending her poems to be set to melodies, Achim asked Bettine

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<sup>49</sup> “Wahrlich heute wie damals sauge ich noch aus Dir alle Energie des Lebens, wie damals, mäßig, kräftigt der Gesang Deiner Lieder meine geistigen Regungen [...] Dann geh ich ans Klavier, und komponiere irgend eines Deiner Lieder, dessen Rhythmus dem meiner Empfindung entspricht.” Willison, “The Unknown Musician,” 315, she cites Bettine von Arnim, *Werke und Briefe*, eds. Gustav Konrad (1-4) and Joachim Müller (5) (Köln: Bartman, 1958-1963), V:128.

<sup>50</sup> “The Unknown Musician,” 315.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 316.

not just to compose melodies but rather to allow them to emerge, “if it so urges to come out of you, that you cannot resist.”<sup>52</sup>

Bettina seems to have followed up on this idea in a letter of 1818, when she tellingly expressed a metaphor of “Lebensmelodien” to describe her daily activities<sup>53</sup> in a letter to Amalie Helvig, the only female poet whose texts she used for her songs, including a setting of “Weihe an Hellas,”<sup>54</sup> as Ann Willison relates:

Helvig, the Weimar poet whose literary pursuits were encountered by Goethe and Schiller, became a close associate of Brentano-von Arnim after 1816.<sup>55</sup> Some of Brentano-von Arnim’s comments to Helvig reveal changing sensibilities. In the spring of 1818, she used the metaphor “Lebensmelodien” to describe everyday household events.<sup>56</sup>

What was the nature of Bettine’s “Lebensmelodien”? Thinking in terms of “Unwillkürlichkeit” and “psychological music” we can perhaps summarize them as melodies inspired by life events and drawn from, or rather emanating “involuntarily”

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<sup>52</sup> “Wenn es sich so aus Dir hervordrängt, dass Du es nicht lassen kannst,” Willison, “The Unknown Musician,” 326, cites Reinhold Steig and Herman Grimm, eds., *Achim von Arnim und die ihm nahe standen*, 3 vols. (Bern: Lang, 1913; 1970), II:379.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 332.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 332.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., cites Henriette von Bissing, *Das Leben der Dichterin Amalie von Helvig* (Berlin: Hertz, 1889), 393.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

("unwillkürlich") from her "Empfindungen" about these "events." Joachim and Bettine presumably had plenty of opportunities to exchange thoughts – such as during the *Musikabende* in Berlin or in Weimar, when Joachim first met Bettine. Possibly Joachim's *Psychologische Musik* drew on her inspiration, perhaps as a consequence of a conversation the two had about composition. The similarity between Joachim's and Bettine's approach to composing, however, remains conceptual; their approaches cannot be equated with regard to compositional training and expertise. Nevertheless, Joachim's perception that "a proper composer, like any other poet, must find everywhere a connection to the inner, individual tone of his soul; his music must also resound in eternal evolution around him," as he noted in December 1853 to Gisela,<sup>57</sup> indeed, sounds as if his ideas might have received a coloring from Bettine's ideas.

Bettine von Arnim's song "Lied des Schülers" was composed to a text by Achim von Arnim and in fact inserted and published<sup>58</sup> as a "Musikbeilage" ("a musical supplement") in his collection of novellas from 1812, including *Isabella von Ägypten*.<sup>59</sup> The

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<sup>57</sup> "Ein rechter Tondichter muß, wie jeder andere Dichter, überall Beziehung zum eigenen inneren Ton seiner Seele finden, im ewigen Werden um sich her muß auch seine Musik erklingen.") *Joachim Briefe*, II:13-14.

<sup>58</sup> Moering, "Bettine's Liedvertonungen," in "Der Geist muß Freiheit genießen...!" *Bettine von Arnim – Studien* 2, 70.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 70-71.

song describes the point of view of one “unhappy in love.”<sup>60</sup> If Bettine composed this song as she did the setting of Goethe, she presumably jotted down the words first, then added the pitches, according to her “Empfindung.”<sup>61</sup> Here is the text on which Bettine based her melody:

<b>“Lied des Schülers” (Achim von Arnim)</b>	<b>“Song of the Pupil” (Achim von Arnim)</b>
Die freie Nacht ist aufgegangen, unsichtbar wird ein Mensch dem andern. So kann ich mit den Tränen prangen und hin zu Liebchens Fenster wandern. Der Wächter ruft seine Stunden, der Kranke jammert seine Schmerzen; Die Liebe klagt ihre Wunden, und bei der Leiche schimmern Kerzen.	The free night has fallen, Invisible becomes one human to another. So I can glow with tears And wander to my love’s window. The guard calls out the hours, The sick bemoans his pains; Love laments her wound, And by the corpse candles shimmer.
Die Liebste ist mir heut gestorben, wo sie dem Feinde sich vermählet, ich habe Lieb in Leid geborgen, ihr Tränen mir die Sterne zählet. Wie herzlich ist das Licht der Sterne, wie schmerzhaft ist das Licht der Fenster, Ein dichter Nebel deckt die Ferne, und mich umspinnen, die Gespenster.	My beloved has died today, when she married the enemy, I have kept love in sorrow, your tears count the stars for me. How heartfelt is the light of the stars, How painful the light of the windows, A dense fog covers the distance, And ghosts surround me.
Im Hause ist ein wildes Klingen, die Menschen mir so still ausweichen, In Mitleid mich dann fern umringen: So bin ich auch von eures Gleichen?	In the house there is busy noise, People avoiding me quietly, In pity, then, distantly encompass me: So am I one of your kind?

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<sup>60</sup> “Unglücklich verliebt.” Renate Moering, ed. *Bettine von Arnim (1785-1859). Lieder und Duette für Singstimme und Klavier*, 64.

<sup>61</sup> “The Unknown Musician,” 315.

<p>Mich hielt der Wald bei Tag verborgen, die schwarze Nacht hat mich befreiet. Mein Liebchen weckt ein schöner Morgen, der mich dem ewgen Jammer weiht.</p> <p>Wie oft hab ich hier froh gesessen, wenn alle Sterne im Erblassen, Auch alle Welt hat mich vergessen, seit mich die Liebste hat verlassen: Nichts weiß von mir die grüne Erde, nichts weiß von mir die lichte Sonne, Der Mondenglanz ist mir Beschwerde, die Nacht ist meiner Tränen Bronne [Brunnen].</p>	<p>I have been hidden away by the forest by day, The black night has freed me. My love is awoken by a beautiful morning, Which consecrates me to eternal sorrow.</p> <p>How often have I sat here joyful, When all stars paled, All the world, too, has forgotten me, Since my beloved has abandoned me: Nothing knows of me the green earth, Nothing knows of me the bright sun, The moon's glint is, for me, a burden, The night is the well of my tears [my translation].</p>
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Since Joachim had access in the 1850s to Bettine's other songs,<sup>62</sup> his choice of this song and its overwhelmingly melancholic text – and uncanny resemblance in some lines to Joachim's personal situation at the end of the 1850s – is compelling, to say the least. Joachim was attracted to Achim's work, as he wrote to Gisela in December 1853, speaking of his "Gedichte": "That is a genuine poet; one should put his writings in the hands of every musician one is fond of. Or, if one has ones instrument in hand, or ones pen, so one should put them [the writings] on ones desk [or music stand]—with Arnim

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<sup>62</sup> Moering, ed., *Lieder und Duette für Singstimme und Klavier*, 69, she cites Moser ed., *Johannes Brahms im Briefwechsel mit Joseph Joachim*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2 vols. (1908; 1921; reprint, Tutzing: Schneider, 1974), 18-20, letter from Joachim to Brahms of November 1853.

everything overflows with the fullness of feeling.”<sup>63</sup> On October 24, 1854, Joachim reported to Gisela<sup>64</sup> about reading Achim von Arnim’s *Novellen*. If he read the first volume, published in 1839, the first novella would have been *Isabella von Ägypten. Kaiser Karl des Fünften erste Jugendliebe*,<sup>65</sup> which contains on page 145 the text of Bettine’s song, here titled, after the first line, “Die freie Nacht ist aufgegangen.” In August 1856, furthermore, Joachim mentioned to Gisela that he was working on a symphony about Achim von Arnim: “[Kleist and] your dear father with all his full, warm world of freshness and devotion! The two symphonies, which I dedicate to both, grow continually in me.”<sup>66</sup> Presumably Joachim read the first novella and would have become acquainted with this text then. But it could also be that Bettine’s “Lied des Schülers” came to his attention in the 1850s when he held some of her songs in his hands.

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<sup>63</sup> “Das ist ein echter Dichter: dessen Schriften müßte man jedem Musiker in die Hand drücken, wenn man ihn lieb hat; oder hat er gerade sein Instrument in der Hand, oder die Notenfeder, so lege man sie ihm auf’s Pult: bei Arnim ist alles überströmende Fülle des Empfindens.” *Joachim Briefe*, I:117, letter of December 3-4, 1853.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, I:222, letter of October 24, 1854.

<sup>65</sup> Achim von Arnim. *Novellen*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Veit and Comp., 1839), 145.

<sup>66</sup> “[Kleist und] Dein theurer Vater mit seiner ganzen, vollen warmen Weltfrische und Andacht! Die beiden Sinfonien, die ich beiden gelobt, wachsen immer in mir fort.” *Joachim Briefe*, I:367, letter to Gisela of the middle of August, 1856.

What concerns us about Achim's dark, romantic text is whether Joachim chose to parallel its pessimism in his music, and further, how, or if, he dealt with Bettine's melody. The melody, after all, is in major, perhaps unexpected given the text's overflowing romantic associations of death, separation, night, and longing. The following example and diagram show Bettine's song, divided into six phrases, and, further below, how Joachim used five of the phrases in the exposition of the first movement of his concerto.

Bettine's melody "Lied des Schülers" (without accompaniment), text by Achim von Arnim	Bettine's phrases as used in Joachim's Concerto	
	a	m. 1
	b	m. 3
	c	m. 8
	d	not used
	e	m. 35
	f	m. 5

**Example 89, Bettine von Arnim, "Lied des Schülers"** (Melody, Accompaniment omitted)

In the first presentation of the theme, by the orchestra (see Ex. 90), Joachim varies phrases a, b, and c of Bettine's song by removing the pickup, changing the rhythm, and altering the continuation, respectively. Phrase e of her song is not used. In comparison to Bettine's fragmented song structure – in which rests between each segment stand out

conspicuously<sup>67</sup> – Joachim creates a much more lyrical and seamless primary theme, where tenderness and sweetness determine the tone, as he expressed in a letter: “[The first movement of the concerto could be effective only through its tenderness.”<sup>68</sup> The listener’s impression of the opening is one of a serene calmness, animated only by the solo violin’s embellishments, which, however, does not break the established mood.

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<sup>67</sup> On one hand the melody strikes the tone of a folk song. But the periodicity is unusual – almost Lutheran – the caesuras are like “breathing rests” for the congregation. Thanks to Michael Uhde for this insight.

<sup>68</sup> “[The concerto’s first movement could] be effective only through its tenderness, while the last movement demands rather much rhythmic decisiveness, also missing in the Philharmonic Orchestra in unknown works.” (“[der 1. Satz des Konzerts könnte] nur durch Zartheit wirken.”) See *Joachim Briefe*, II:340-341, letter to Clara of July 24, 1864.



**Allegro non troppo**

**a** Tutti *p dolce*

**b**

**f** *p dolce*

**c'**

**c'** *sempre p*

**d'**

**Example 90, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO,  
Orchestral Introduction (mm. 1-15)**

After this orchestral presentation, using the phrases a, b, c', d', and f of the song, the violin enters with an improvisatory solo introduction, which relies on scales and broken interval patterns (Ex. 91).

**Example 91, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, First Solo Entry  
(mm. 17-26)**

The solo violin explores, then “tests” the fingerboard and the “tuning” in a stretch of ten measures consisting of scales, arpeggios, and sequential figures, which set the tone for the compositional language that the violin adopts throughout the concerto: improvisation-like, embellished long lines, highly lyrical, but nevertheless rather complex from a violinist’s point of view. In Beethoven’s violin concerto the violin first enters in octaves, lining out the dominant-seventh chord of C major, followed by descending, then ascending broken triads in different patterns, before reaching, with a scale, the highest note, where the timpani segues with three timpani strokes into the solo

violin's first theme – here appearing plain, rather than in figuration. The comparable moment in Joachim's opening, after the "testing of the fingerboard," yields the beginning of Bettine's song in "plain" attire.

The violin presents the antecedent phrase (a and b from the song) before slipping into decorative figurations. To the accompaniment of solo violin figurations, as in Beethoven's Op. 61, the orchestra takes over the song-phrases, repeating mm. 6-9, before the solo violin resumes again, featuring material derived from the dotted motive of phrase d. In m. 51 the primary theme complex reaches a PAC in m. 51. Also the secondary theme continues in improvisatory mode, again evoking Beethoven's Op. 61 by presenting the theme first in the orchestra while the violin plays a simple accompanimental turning figure, after which the roles switch and the violin plays the theme. As the following diagram shows, Joachim's exposition employs the song material mostly in the primary theme zone, while the secondary key area does not seem to draw from it.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Tutti/Solo</b>	<b>Sonata form</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Song parts quoted</b>
<b>mm. 1-15</b>	Tutti	<b>Exposition</b> Primary theme, antecedent and consequent	G major mod. to D major	a, b, f, c'
<b>mm. 16-25</b>	Solo	Introduction	D major mod. to G major	
<b>mm. 26-30</b>	Solo	Primary theme antecedent	G	a, b

<b>mm. 30-34</b>	Tutti	Primary theme consequent	G mod. to D	f, c'
<b>mm. 35-50</b>	Solo	Primary theme continuation	G, b, D, G	d, f, d, a', c'
<b>mm. 51-70</b>		Transition	G mod. to d, B-flat, d	b' (head of b), d'
<b>mm. 71-74</b>	Tutti	Secondary theme	D	
<b>mm. 75-78</b>	Solo	Secondary theme	D	
<b>mm. 79-94</b>		Continuation		
<b>mm. 95-101</b>		Closing theme I	D	
<b>mm. 102-116</b>		Modulation	D mod. to B-flat, d, D	
<b>mm. 117-136</b>		EEC (harmonic goal of exposition) Closing theme II	D D	

**Figure 20, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G major WoO, First Movement, Formal Outline of the Exposition**

The exposition ends with the same focus on the solo violin's extensive embellishments; but by now it takes flight simply on held D-major chords, unrelated to the song material, making the ornaments seem like ends in themselves, as in the following example (Ex. 92):



**Example 92, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, First Movement  
(mm. 129-136)**

In light of Achim's text we might wonder how it is possible that such a hopeful or soothing opening could have been inspired by such a dark text? Joachim's quite lyrical treatment of the first movement, for the most part, matches Bettine's melody, in which peaceful optimism prevails, rather than respond to Achim von Arnim's text. Only the beginning of the development disrupts the mood, as if suddenly reacting the text.



**Example 93, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, First Movement,  
Beginning of the Development (mm. 137-147)**

First, an abrupt harmonic change occurs (see Ex. 93, m. 137 ff.), succeeding a strong arrival on D major, the ostensible end of the exposition. But only a few measures into the development the orchestra drops to *pp* and turns to F-sharp major (Ex. 93).

This musical score excerpt shows measures 147-157 of the first movement. The piano accompaniment features a variety of dynamics: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), *sf* (sforzando), and *ff* (fortissimo). The violin part includes a triplet marking '3'. The key signature has changed to two sharps (F# and C#), indicating F# major. The time signature remains 2/4.

**Example 94, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, First Movement  
(mm. 147-157)**

After this brief calm episode Joachim steers the music dramatically back to the minor, and we hear hammering short-short-short-long motives – implying a certain fatalistic urgency – in the dark key of D minor (Ex. 94, especially second and third systems) before the orchestra and then the violin, climax on a grueling dominant minor ninth chord on G, highlighting again the A-flat (G-sharp) in high register (Ex. 94, last measure).

Beyond this unexpected change, however, little reveals either the occasion for Joachim's publication of the concerto or the underlying text by Achim von Arnim, raising the question when Joachim composed the first movement, and suggesting, perhaps, that neither Gisela's death nor Achim's text had an immediate impact on the creation of the concerto. The chronology of the concerto, especially critical for the second movement, as we will discuss next, suggests that the work originated in 1854 – although it remains unclear which parts were composed then and which were heavily revised later. But if indeed the concerto were written in 1854, that chronology might explain the music's seeming light-heartedness even in light of the text. However, seen from Joachim's perspective in 1860-1862 – the years which, according to Joachim's letters, saw the most intensive compositional work on this concerto – the second strophe of the poem sounds like a notice that the composer himself could have written: "Die Liebste ist mir heut gestorben, wo sie dem Feinde sich vermählet." At least "when she married the

enemy" ("wo sie dem Feinde sich vermählet") parallels Gisela and Herman's factual wedding in 1859. Although Joachim and Herman remained on friendly and respectful terms, Herman was a competitor, albeit not an "enemy" ("Feind").

We do not know enough about how the first movement looked in the middle or end of the 1850s, or even in 1864 at the work's first performance, to answer how, if at all, this movement alludes to Gisela. But, as we shall see in the next section, there is reason to believe that the 1864 version of the first movement was similar to the one published in 1889. If composed in the early 1860s and more or less similar to the version we have discussed above, what role could the context of this movement have played in the concerto?

The first movement's substantial ornamental figurations – specifically Joachim's idiosyncratic, exceptionally lyrical "legato virtuosity" – prompts one more reflection. On the one hand, Joachim's musical syntax is strongly reminiscent of Beethoven's violin concerto, perhaps the most emblematic piece in the solo violin repertoire to rely on extensive passages featuring such "technical" vocabulary. At the same time, Beethoven's Op. 61 *transcends* the "exercise"-evoking nature of this vocabulary through a musically sensitive and lyrical employment; that is to say, the decorative garlands essentially assume thematic meaning, encouraging us to forget its construction. Indeed, we are reminded of Tovey's comment about Joachim's ornaments:



Nowhere outside Bach and the last works of Beethoven is there to be found any such ornamentation as that of Joachim's violin works. There are plenty of good schools and formulas in this matter, but with Joachim, as with Bach and Beethoven, the ornaments are only in small part formulas, and are mostly individual inventions as pregnant as any theme. Brahms himself never attempts such a style. Still less does it come within the imagination of the mere virtuoso player. [...] The ornaments of the *Hungarian* concerto [...] are like Bach's. Play them slowly and you will find them to be living melodies with real harmonic meanings.<sup>69</sup>

Although Tovey's comment pertains to the second violin concerto, one could argue the same for plenty of passages in Joachim's Concerto in G Major, the most lyrical of all three concertos. The first entry, and the solo violin's "escape" into "improvisation mode" in its solo theme (mm. 26) seem to substantiate Tovey's comment. Beethoven's violin concerto treats the violin, as has been discussed at length elsewhere, in a particular manner, offering few singable melodies. Instead the violin ornaments repeat and accompany the orchestra, which, during the course of the first movement, plays numerous singable melodies. Indeed, one of the overriding impressions listening to Beethoven's violin concerto is that the concerto assigns to the solo violin, especially in the first movement, mostly "figurations – triadic and chordal arpeggiation, ornamentation around tones, chromatically rising chains of sequences, etc."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, III:110.

<sup>70</sup> Christoph-Hellmut Mahling, "Violinkonzert op. 61," in *Beethoven. Interpretation seiner Werke*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols., ed. Carl Dahlhaus et al. (Laaber: Laaber, 1996), I:462: "Die Solovioline bringt zunächst erstmals das Hauptthema unverändert in seiner Urgestalt (m. 301-304), ergeht sich dann aber in

On the one hand, the ubiquitous ornamentation suggests a tie to the aesthetic to which Joachim was linked as a violinist later in the nineteenth century, as we have mentioned earlier. On the other hand, the improvisatory ornaments in the first movement ornament Bettine's song, as if improvising on it, particularly in the solo violin's treatment of the primary theme. In addition, the embellishing figures inevitably conjure up an image of Joachim losing himself in improvisation, seemingly forgetting himself in his composition, as evoked by Bettine's and Joachim's quotations cited earlier.

But another image comes to mind, which accounts for Joachim's presumed awareness of Achim's text and for the occasion of publishing the concerto in 1889. The many scale-like figures and large decorative arpeggios evoke the image of bridging the distance between life and death through scales (Leiter, or ladder) analogous to the biblical image of angels climbing up and down Jacob's Ladder or heaven's ladder. This analogy seems to acknowledge the serene, almost joyful character of the music in the opening, which transcends both the dark text of the song and the dedication commemorating Gisela's death. The biblical image of Jacob's Ladder as an interpretive tool was used (much earlier before Schoenberg's celebrated *Jacobsleiter* of 1922, rev. 1944)

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Figurationen – Dreiklangs- und Akkordbrechungen, Tonumspielungen, chromatisch-ansteigenden Sequenzketten etc.”

on the front page of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* to announce Schumann's death in 1856.<sup>71</sup> But it was also a staple of both Bettine and Achim von Arnim.<sup>72</sup> It fits the affect of the movement and connects the music with Achim's text. Andreas Moser's interpretation of the second movement, as we shall see in the next section, evokes a similarly otherworldly analogy, for here we encounter a movement literally conjuring up associations of life and death.<sup>73</sup> Another work that comes to mind, in considering Joachim's concerto, is Alban Berg's Violin Concerto "Dem Andenken eines Engels" (1935), which also begins, like Beethoven's Op. 61, by "tuning the strings." Andreas Moser's interpretation of Joachim's second movement, evokes a similarly otherworldly analogy for a movement literally conjuring up associations of life and death.

### **6.3 Gisela von Arnim and Joachim's Violin Concerto in G major WoO**

The Violin Concerto in G major gestated through a complex compositional and revision process that spanned more than thirty years. Joachim presumably began the

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<sup>71</sup> Franz Brendel, ed., *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 45, No. 9 (August 22, 1856): 85.

<sup>72</sup> *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, collected by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano, and Bettine von Arnim's *Goethe's Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde* use this image as metaphor.

<sup>73</sup> Franz Brendel, ed., *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 45, No. 9 (August 22, 1856): 85.

concerto in 1854<sup>74</sup> and composed the main parts in the early 1860s, bringing the concerto to its first performance in 1864, when it was heard in Hanover<sup>75</sup> and London.<sup>76</sup> But for various reasons – one of them being Joachim’s highly reduced compositional activity after 1857 – it remained unpublished until 1889, when it was finally released with the

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<sup>74</sup> According to Borchard, in the repertoire list published on the CD-R appended to *Stimme und Geige*.

<sup>75</sup> “Yes, you were far away for long, and since you are still far away, I especially now have to regret artistically where I will hear my new concerto with orchestra next week. Otherwise you and Johann would be present to attend such attempts, and the joy and stimulation that would afford me I don’t need to say – simply put: if you were here! I have lain fallow as a composer for so long that I am rather happy to see something of mine finished; I begin again to think of creating with joy, not with pure nostalgia. I am not yet satisfied with the first movement – your fine judgment would be lovely and worthy. Let’s see, hopefully later.” (“Ja, sie waren recht weit und lange weg, und dass sie ersteres noch sind, habe ich besonders jetzt auch künstlerisch zu bedauern, wo ich mein neues Concert in nächster Woche mit Orchester hören will. Sonst pflegten Sie und Johannes bei solchen Versuchen zu sein, und was ich an Freude und Anregung dadurch hatte, brauche ich nicht zu sagen – also bloß: wären sie hier! Ich habe so lange als Componist brach gelegen, dass ich ordentlich froh bin, etwas fertiges vor mir zu sehen, und ich fange wieder an, mit Freude, nicht bloß *wehmüthiglich* an Schaffen zu denken. Mit dem ersten Satz bin ich noch nicht zufrieden – da wäre mir denn ihr feines Urtheil lieb und werth. Nun, später hoffentlich.”) *Joachim Briefe*, II:339, letter to Clara Schumann of April 20, 1864. This letter points, presumably, to a rehearsal; Borchard reports that the first performance happened on November 5, 1864 (see Borchard, 129, fn. 197).

<sup>76</sup> In a letter to Clara of July 24, 1864 we learn that Joachim’s G-major Concerto was performed in the summer in London, together with works by Mendelssohn and Sterndale Bennett in one concert. Joachim found that the orchestral accompaniment was rough. “Very roughly accompanied, which for this piece is particularly unfavorable—its first movement could be effective only through its tenderness, while the last movement demands rather much rhythmic decisiveness, also missing in the Philharmonic Orchestra in unknown works.” (“Sehr roh begleitet, was gerade diesem Stück besonders ungünstig ist, dessen 1. Satz nur durch Zartheit wirken könnte, während der letzte Satz ziemlich viel rhythmische Entschiedenheit verlangt, die auch dem Philharmonischen Orchester bei unbekannten Sachen abgeht.”) *Joachim Briefe*, II:340-341.

dedication to Gisela von Arnim, whose death on April 4, 1889 it commemorates. At this point Gisela and Joachim had been separated for decades.<sup>77</sup> Although it remains ambiguous what exactly Joachim revised between 1864 and 1889, this chapter offers alternative explanations why Joachim did not publish the work earlier and also which movements he likely did *not* revise, at least not beyond small changes, after 1878, the year of the only surviving manuscript source before 1889. While Borchard suggests that substantial revisions took place during the long compositional process before the work's publication in 1889,<sup>78</sup> we shall argue that these alterations may have affected only the third movement, allowing us in turn to reconsider the meaning of the first two movements.

According to Borchard, Joachim originally planned on publishing an early version of the concerto together with the *Hamlet* Overture and the three pieces Op. 5, which he called *Gisela Stücke*,<sup>79</sup> so that the beginnings of the concerto could have dated as

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<sup>77</sup> After the break-up in 1857/1859 Gisela and Joachim were on friendly terms after Joachim's marriage to Amalie Schneeweiss in 1863. However, a fight in the early 1870s made the relationship end, likely, in 1872, see Borchard 137, fn. 255, after which no correspondence exists until Joachim wrote Herman after Gisela's death in 1889.

<sup>78</sup> Borchard, *Stimme und Geige*, 120, fn. 197: "First performance in Hanover on November 5, 1864; published with large revisions in 1889 on the death of Gisela von Arnim" ("Erstaufführung [of the violin concerto] in Hannover am 5. 11. 1864; veröffentlicht mit großen Überarbeitungen 1889 anlässlich des Todes von Gisela von Arnim.")

far back as the early Hanover years. (He moved there in early 1853.) But no version from that time exists that might transmit how the concerto then looked. A copy of the piano-violin score from 1878, now preserved in the Brahms *Nachlass* in Hamburg,<sup>80</sup> confirms, however, that no significant changes were made to any of the three movements compared to the published version.<sup>81</sup> Borchard may not have known the 1878 copy; in any event, she believed that Joachim did make “great revisions” in the work presumably between 1864, the year of the premiere, and 1889.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Borchard, 135-136: “It is no coincidence, that it was Gisela who presented to Joachim the *F.A.E.* Sonata, also known as the *Three Men Sonata*. Joachim counted his G-major Violin Concerto in its first, unpublished version, along with the *Hamlet Overture* and the three *Violinstücke Op. 5*, among the Gisela-pieces.” (“Es ist kein Zufall, daß sie [Gisela] es war, die Joachim die *F.A.E.-Sonate*, auch die ‘*Dreimännersonate*’ genannt, überreichen durfte. Joachim zählte sein *G-Dur Violinkonzert* in einer ersten unpublizierten Fassung, wie die *Hamlet-Ouvertüre* und die drei *Violinstücke op. 5*, zu den Gisela-Stücken, die er ursprünglich zusammen herausgeben wollte.”) The summer of 1854 was also when Joachim wrote to her (during his Berlin stay of several weeks): “Today I have composed a song by your father.” (“Ich hab’ heut ein Lied Deines Vaters componirt.”) Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 50. Furthermore, in October 1854 he wrote again about reading the novels of Gisela’s father, among which he may have found “*Lied des Schülers*,” *Ibid.*, 68, letter of October 25, 1854.

<sup>80</sup> Manuscript #Bra:Ac41, *Brahms Nachlass*, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky. See fn. 97.

<sup>81</sup> Joseph Joachim, *Violin-Concert G-dur* (Berlin: Bote und Bock, 1889).

<sup>82</sup> It is unclear to me on what basis Borchard speaks of the G-major Concerto’s genesis in 1854, as it does not seem to be mentioned in the letters. Rather, the letters establish that the majority of the work was written in the early 1860s.

Besides some reviews of friends<sup>83</sup> and newspapers about the performances in the 1860s<sup>84</sup> an intriguing letter from the composer Max Bruch (1838-1920) about a performance in Hanover – very likely the premiere – casts new light on the “great revisions” of Joachim’s concerto. Reminiscing about this performance, Bruch shared with Joachim on May 20, 1891:

Herr H. Bock [who published the concerto in 1889] gave me as a present the score of your G-major Concerto, and I read through it with pleasure during my trip from Berlin to Düsseldorf. If everything has not deceived me, hasn’t the thematic material of the first two movements remained the same? I came to know the concerto many years ago at your residence in Hanover, and since the main themes then already greatly pleased me, they have always remained in my memory.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Clara’s review of 1864 is recorded, where she reports having played through the work on the piano: “But now to your concerto: getting to know it was of great interest to me, and also that I gladly might hear something by you and with orchestra. The violin seems to me so intimately blended with the orchestra that it is hardly possible for me to obtain a clear overview with the piano.” (“Doch nun zu Ihrem Konzert, das kennen zu lernen mich sehr interessiert hat, und das ich so gar gern von Ihnen und mit Orchester hören möchte. (...) Die Geige scheint mir so innig mit dem Orchester verschmolzen, daß es für mich kaum möglich, einen klaren Überblick nach dem Clavier zu gewinnen.”) *Joachim Briefe*, II:344, letter from Clara of August 22, 1864.

<sup>84</sup> Reviews of the Concerto are recorded by the Leipzig musical newspaper *Signale für die musikalische Welt*, report about the eighth Philharmonic Concert London on July 7, 1864 (Jahrgang 22); *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 22, No. 48 (17 November, 1864); *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* No. 4 (January 22, 1868), “[the] G major Concerto [did not achieve] [...] the general impression [...] of the more zestful Hungarian Concerto” (“Joachim spielte sein neues Konzert in G-Dur, dessen Totaleindruck jenen des schwungvollerren ‘ungarischen’ Concerts nicht erreichte;”) *Die Musik*, Jahrgang 6, No. 4, vol. 24, ed. Bernhard Schuster (Berlin: Schuster and Loeffler, 1906-7).

<sup>85</sup> “Herr H. Bock [who published the concerto in 1889] machte mir die Partitur Ihres G Dur Concertes zum Geschenk, und ich habe sie auf der Fahrt von Berlin nach Düsseldorf mit Freuden

Bruch's letter suggests that he knew the violin concerto from one of its performances in 1864. Bruch did not specify the Hanover performance, but of the few reported between 1864 and 1889,<sup>86</sup> only the premier, to my knowledge, took place in Hanover. Furthermore, "at your residence in Hanover" ("bei Ihnen in Hannover") suggests that Joachim was still employed at the Hanover court, which he had left already in 1868.<sup>87</sup> But what this letter clearly implies, albeit with a question mark, is that the thematic material of the first two movements remained largely unaltered after 1864. This piece of evidence is especially significant for the second movement.

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durchgesehen. Wenn mich nicht alles täuscht, so ist der thematische Stoff der beiden ersten Sätze derselbe geblieben? Ich lernte das Concert vor vielen Jahren in Hannover bei Ihnen kennen, und da mir die Haupt-Themen schon damals sehr gefielen, so sind sie mir immer im Gedächtnis geblieben." *Joachim Briefe*, III:390.

<sup>86</sup> Moser reports (*Joachim Briefe*, III:238) that Joachim performed, on November 28, 1882, his unpublished G-major Concerto with orchestra in the Berlin Hochschule (then called *Königlich Akademische Hochschule für ausübende Tonkunst*), where he was a professor since 1869. Another performance is mentioned in early February 1865. Joachim writes to David: "Therefore I'm sending it to you [to rehearse]. It is not really difficult." ("... darum schicke ich es [das Violinkonzert G-Dur] ihnen [zum proben]. Sehr schwer ist es nicht.") The letter, written on February 5, 1865, suggests that in early February 1865 the concerto was performed in Leipzig with Ferdinand David conducting. *Joachim Briefe*, II:358.

<sup>87</sup> Beatrix Borchard, "Joachim, Joseph," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14322> (accessed May 16, 2014).



While the letters of the 1850s betray few traces of the Violin Concerto – there are references to Joachim’s interest in Achim von Arnim’s novels,<sup>88</sup> in which the text of the song used in the concerto, “Lied des Schülers,” is printed – the early 1860s give ample evidence of Joachim’s immersion in composing, after 1857-58 he lost his inspiration (“Stimmung”<sup>89</sup>), which, we can safely assume, was partly related to the forced separation from Gisela between May 1857 and February 1859,<sup>90</sup> a period that yielded only three letters between them. The separation was again reinforced between 1859 and 1863,<sup>91</sup> when no letter, except between Herman and Joachim, was evidently written. After the 1857 separation, Joachim did not compose much, except for finishing the *Hungarian* Violin Concerto in 1857 and composing the *Notturmo* Op. 12 (1858).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> See fn. 79.

<sup>89</sup> See fn. 13.

<sup>90</sup> Between May 1857 and February 1859 we have no significant letters; in Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim* this time is represented by a gap.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 173, letter to Gisela of February 23, 1859.

<sup>92</sup> The *Notturmo* reveals in tones that Gisela was still in his orbit – at least in spirit – through a conspicuous appearance of the G-sharp-E-A cipher. Besides these pieces, Borchard’s repertoire list appended to her *Stimme und Geige* mentions very few (and partly occasional or arranged) pieces between 1858 and 1862.

Although Joachim was occupied with the concerto already in 1860,<sup>93</sup> not until 1862 did his urge to compose gain new momentum. In the summer he spent several weeks in London, as he reports,<sup>94</sup> without being hindered by “wistfulness” (“Wehmut”), a problem he seems to have had, as a letter to Clara in 1864 reveals.<sup>95</sup> In the summer of 1862, in any case, composing seems to have been a productive (albeit solitary) experience:

I have not written a word to any of my friends during the last month. You understand, that evidently I cannot lack company if I should not have it through *Frau Musica*. When, however, I see you again in October, I hope to bring much music paper with me, as a sign that the latter *Dame* remained my favorite company.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *Joachim Briefe*, II:66, letter from Clara to Joachim of January 2, 1860.

<sup>94</sup> “I’m doing rather well, finally to be living in a great city without fearing the incursions of publicity. I’d rather not play anything for you until I have produced a new violin concerto, good or bad. I’ve played my old things for you enough.” (“Es thut mir gerade wohl, endlich einmal wieder in einer großen Stadt zu wohnen, ohne die Furcht vor den Anforderungen der Öffentlichkeit. [...] Ich geige euch nicht eher etwas vor, bis ich ein neues Violin-Concert, gut oder schlecht, producire. Die alten Sachen habe ich euch genug gegeigt.”) Letter to Avé Lallemand of September 27, 1862. Also, see this letter: “Nun leb wohl und arbeite fleissig an deinem Violinkonzert auf das wir uns beiden freuen. Du kannst es wohl denken.” *Joachim Briefe*, II:228, letter from Herman of August 29, 1862.

<sup>95</sup> See fn. 75.

<sup>96</sup> “Ich habe in dem letzten Monat an keinen meiner Freunde ein Wort geschrieben. Sie sehen, dass es mir also an Gesellschaft nicht fehlen kann, wenn ich sie nicht an der Frau Musica haben sollte. Wenn ich sie aber im Oktober wiedersehen werde, so hoffe ich einiges Notenpapier als Zeichen mitzubringen, dass die letztgenannte Dame mir die liebste Gesellschaft geblieben.” *Joachim Briefe*, II:226, letter to Clara of August 26, 1862.

But to understand the relevance of the compositional history of the concerto for its meaning, we shall now turn to the music of the second movement – thematically determined, according to Bruch, by 1864 or, at the latest, according to the manuscript copy,<sup>97</sup> by 1878<sup>98</sup> – and its multi-leveled allusions, musical topoi, and certain events in the harmonic trajectory, as well as connections to other works dedicated to Gisela and, indeed, even ciphers.

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<sup>97</sup> Manuscript #Bra:Ac41, *Brahms Nachlass*, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky. This score from 1878 (dated twice – title page says 3. Fenruar 1878, the final double bar reveals 30. Januar 1878) confirms that the final 1889 version of the concerto was very similar to the 1878 version. Although corrections are visible in the 1878 score – and some small sections involving only a few measures are pasted over – all three movements of the 1889 version were merely revised in small details and no thematic material was changed. The glued-over passages comprise three measures in the opening violin solo, seven measures after letter F, five measures before letter L, and three measures after letter O. The notes in brown ink, written onto the staff paper pasted over, are note-consistent with the published version of 1889. The copyist's score reveals consistently fine-grained handwriting.

<sup>98</sup> The implications are multifarious: some reviewers who did not know about the genesis suspected that Joachim had borrowed passages from Brahms and Bruch, even though Joachim's concerto predated by many years the suspected models. As Moser says in a footnote (Moser, *Joachim Briefe*, II:227), "he then wrote the G-major Concerto; when it was published twenty years later, a well-known music journal wrote about phrases that were put together from concertos of Brahms and Bruch!" ("Er schrieb damals das G Dur Konzert; als es nach 20 Jahren veröffentlicht wurde, schrieb eine bekannte Musikzeitung es bestände nur aus Phrasen, die aus dem Brahmschen und Bruchschen Konzerte zusammengeholt seien!")

The image shows the first four measures of the second movement of Joachim's Violin Concerto in G Major, Op. 11. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The key signature is C minor (three flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score is written for piano and solo violin. The piano part begins with a dotted-rhythm upbeat in measure 1, followed by a descending chromatic tetrachord (C-B-A-G) in measure 2. The violin enters in measure 3 with a triplet figure. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet figure in measure 3 and a descending chromatic tetrachord in measure 4. Dynamics include pp, p, mf, sf, and molto espressivo.

**Example 95, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Second Movement (mm. 1-4)**

As we can see from the opening of the second movement (Ex. 95), Joachim's use of rhythm and chromaticism is highly evocative, inviting us to grasp fully the significance of this movement. The orchestral introduction begins with a dotted-rhythm upbeat, answered in the pickup to m. 3, before being taken over by the solo violin. The key is C minor. The only "melodic" activity, besides the held notes on tonic (mm. 1-2) and dominant (mm. 3-4), is the descending chromatic tetrachord from c in m. 1 to g in m. 3. In short, the second movement is a *Marcia funebre*. It evokes this topos in depth through rhythm, key, and the descending tetrachord. Most famously represented in the second movement, also in C minor, of Beethoven's *Eroica*, Joachim's *Marcia funebre* is in no way less suggestive. What this means – if we can trust both Bruch's report about the second movement's thematic material being "the same" and the 1878 copyist's score – is that Joachim wrote a funeral march for Gisela *while* she was still alive, commemorating,

between 1860 and 1864, the termination of their relationship. Or, it was the occasion that transported him into a mood in which he expressed his melancholy suitable “for the last time” – possibly even thinking more of himself than of Gisela. Retrospectively, this means that Joachim perhaps did acknowledge Achim von Arnim’s text in the first movement – if not in a transcendental manner through the scales, then in highly realistic terms in the funeral march in the second movement. Alternatively or additionally, it means that for Joachim the separation from Gisela meant more than he could express in mere words.

The themes and structure of the music tell a story similarly suggestive, as in *Abendglocken*, and even revisit the use of ciphers. But the degree of their subtlety – far less obvious than in *Abendglocken*, they are rather ingrained deep in the formal structure – and their integration into the *Marcia funebre* contribute, indeed, to the beauty of one of Joachim’s most moving compositions. But as we shall see, the concerto is more than a *Denkmal* or *Andenken*.

To begin with, the descending tetrachord reminds us of Joachim’s *Abendglocken*,<sup>99</sup> where the tetrachord was featured near the end of the composition and emphasized Joachim’s farewell mood after the broken engagement in the fall of 1852. The farewell evoked in the slow movement here, although decades before Gisela’s death, sounds

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<sup>99</sup> See Ch. 1, p. 33.

more definite. Indeed, if Joachim composed this movement around 1860, he was perhaps still thinking about a letter received from Gisela in 1859, emphasizing her (and Herman's) decision that Joachim had to forsake her, to which Joachim's response, the last letter of the printed *Briefwechsel*, alludes:

But I beg you, dear Gisel, make no plans about writing a last time; if you knew how unfortunately that tears at me and disquiets me, you wouldn't do it. Let time and dear God have their say. I hope that we will feel such peace and assurance in what we have decided – by and large – that such small security measures seem like fences in a healthy, open park: they are largely unnecessary and occasionally irritating. If you sensed, however, what a magnetic, healing effect the mere sight of your writing has on me when I am in a bad mood or disturbed, how much more pleasant and compassionate I become to my surroundings, you would at least send me from time to time an empty address, or some words.<sup>100</sup>

That the decision, indeed, was carried out and their romantic liaison terminated is obvious from the paucity of published letters between Gisela and Joachim between 1857 and 1863.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> "Aber ich bitte Dich, liebe Gisel mache keine Pläne von zum "letzten Mal" schreiben; wüßtest Du, wie unglücklich das an mir zerrt, und beunruhigt, du thätest es nicht. Lasse die Zeit und den lieben Gott darin walten; ich hoffe wir fühlen solche Ruhe und Sicherheit in dem was wir uns vorgenommen im Großen und Ganzen, daß so kleine Sicherheitsmaßregeln nur wie kleine dornige Einzäunungen in einem gesunden, freien Park erscheinen, die nichts nützen, nur gelegentlich irritieren. Fühltest Du aber, welche magnetisch gesundende Wirkung Deine bloßen Schrift-Züge auf mich üben, wenn ich verstimmt oder unruhig bin – wie viel theilnehmender, liebenswerther ich dadurch für meine Umgebung werden kann, Du schicktest mir wenigstens von Zeit zu Zeit eine leere Adresse, oder einige Worte." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 173, letter of February 23, 1859.

When the violin enters after the poignant orchestral introduction, it presents the primary theme, expanded over a parallel period of eight measures, wherein antecedent and consequent phrases begin the same, but the former diverts the music to the dominant in m. 8 while the latter already begins modulating in m. 9, and reaches F minor in m. 10 before closing the theme on a perfect authentic cadence in C minor.

Example 96, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante* (mm. 4-12)

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<sup>101</sup> After the very long gap in Joachim's and Gisela's correspondence between May 1857 and February 1859, a few letters were exchanged in 1859 (which suggest that Joachim was still hoping that writing "zum letzten Mal" would not be realized, although it seems that it was). No letter between Gisela and Joachim is printed in the published letters between February 1859 and 1863.

The theme featured in Ex. 96 becomes the returning element in the movement, behaving almost like a refrain in a rondo form. What makes it so wistful is the dissonance created between the descending tetrachord and the long-held notes in the violin, which is especially agonizing on the third beat of m. 2, where the f-sharp, the raised fourth scale degree, creates a passing dissonance that pulls the line inexorably downward on the fourth beat.

After a brief modulation to G major (mm. 18) and a short, new four-measure theme (mm. 33-35 – this theme later assumes greater significance), which is created by splitting off the latter part of the solo violin's consequent phrase (mm. 11-12), *A* returns in a suggestive manner with the first measure being “pulled up” a half-step to A-flat (Ex. 97), rendering the theme as follows (compare to *A* at the beginning of Ex. 96, mm. 5 ff.):



A-flat ↘

*ff*

*sempre pp*

*pp*

**Example 97, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante* (mm. 25-32)**

The tension implied by raising the first measure (Ex. 97, m. 25) of the primary theme to begin with A-flat – which enharmonically is G-sharp – as well as, again, the strong dissonance on the third beat, between the (implied) D-flat major triad and the raised fourth reminds us of Joachim’s comment about “O you soulful G# [=“Giss”]-Seele [soul; a pun on Gisela], you leading tone to the passionate A major in my inner soul.”<sup>102</sup> Here G is the leading tone to a beclouded “Giss,” its enharmonic equivalent.

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<sup>102</sup> Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 35, letter of April 29, 1854.

Furthermore, A-flat is among the highest notes and a pitch dramatically stressed from time to time in the movement. This ensemble of subtle allusions focuses what is readily recognized as a *Marcia funebre* into a “personalized” gesture addressed to the dedicatee. The continuation of this return of *A* takes, after the first measure, an expected course according to the first appearance in m. 5, except that the solo violin here plays the consequent phrase in octaves.

Shortly after the return of *A*, the listener finds himself transported to a new theme in A-flat major, reached via the dominant seventh-chord of A-flat as the pivot chord. Like a warm wind, the A-flat major world (again, enharmonically G-sharp), makes the listener forget the darkness of C minor. In fact, middle sections of the *Marcia funebre* often feature a reflection, or “Rückblick,” on life – in the major. If this movement were to follow a standard slow ternary form (*ABA'*) in a minor-mode movement, this theme would represent the *B* section in the major mode. But Joachim produces a ternary form whose *A'* involves several departures from, and returns to, C minor, like a hybrid form tending toward a rondo (roughly, *ABACA*), somewhat atypical for slow movements, to which we shall return below. The A-flat major section (Ex. 98) evokes a dreamlike world, as in the F-major section in *Abendglocken* (“Geträumtes”), which seems to capture, better than Joachim could express in words, the fleeting, precious beauty and meaning of his most intimate, glowing memories. The fleeting quality adds, at the same

time, a hint of melancholy. Andreas Moser has rightly called this one of the most beautiful themes ever written by the composer.<sup>103</sup>

The musical score for Example 98, Joachim's Violin Concerto in G Major, WoO, Andante (mm. 36-43), is presented in two systems. The first system shows the violin part (top staff) and the piano accompaniment (bottom staff). The piano part includes markings for 'Tutti', 'mf', 'dim.', 'Solo', and 'f'. The violin part includes markings for 'dolce' and 'p'. The score shows a series of chords and melodic lines with triplets and slurs. The second system continues the piano accompaniment with more complex rhythmic patterns and triplets.

**Example 98, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante* (mm. 36-43)**

If the captivating tenderness of the A-flat major theme transports the listener far away from reality, another refrain of *A* redirects his path to the “Wirkliches.” What seems to be the third, episodic section, or *C*, if we view the form as a hybrid rondo, confronts us with harmonic agitation by setting up a conflict between D-flat major (the Neapolitan) and C minor (Ex. 98, second system). Thematically, *C* is based on elements

<sup>103</sup> Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, II:90.

heard in the orbit of the opening *A*, a marcato theme (for now called “b”, beginning of Ex. 99) beginning with quarter notes (first heard in mm. 17-20) and a theme originally made up of the consequent of the primary theme (m. 11) but heard already in mm. 33-35 (for now called “c”).

The musical score for Example 99 is presented in three systems. The first system, marked 'Tutti' and 'ff animato', shows 'Motiv "b"' in the right hand and a bass line. The second system features 'Motiv "c"' in the right hand. The third system, marked 'ff sempre', continues the motifs. The key signature changes from D-flat major to C minor.

**Example 99, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante*, Shift from D-flat major to C minor (mm. 77-85)**

In the key of D-flat, we hear theme “b” and its continuation (mm. 77-80 of Ex. 99) followed by “c” in mm. 81 and first half of 82 (Ex. 99). But in m. 83 an overwhelming harmonic turn leads from a somewhat hopeful D-flat major back to a desperately

hopeless C minor (see mm. 82-85, Ex. 99). This harmonic darkening from D-flat major to C minor is then picked up in a varied repeat by the violin in the subsequent five measures (mm. 85-89), as if trying for a second time, after a failed first effort of the orchestra to maintain the major mode, with no success. This formal section of C in its process-like demeanor – showing how a repeated effort is repeatedly frustrated – seems evocative of Joachim's renewed attempts to hold on to Gisela, reiterating "You cannot abandon me, right?"<sup>104</sup> or, in 1859, his last attempt, "dear Gisel, do not make plans of writing for the last time."<sup>105</sup> In the same month, February 1859, Joachim wrote, after not having heard from her since May 1857: "How well have the traces of your writing felt after such a long, long time. Child, there is no time, no distance, and no experience that could account for what my heart has promised you."<sup>106</sup>

Before the movement comes to a conclusion, C is followed by a return of the primary theme in F minor (A') and, last but not least, a final return of C minor and the theme we have called "c" (from the primary theme's consequent), which has governed

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<sup>104</sup> "Nicht wahr, Du kannst mich nicht verlassen...Für wen soll ich schreiben, wenn nicht für Dich." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 97, letter from the summer of 1856.

<sup>105</sup> "Liebe Gisel, mache keine Pläne von zum 'letzten Mal' schreiben." Ibid., 173, letter of February 23, 1859.

<sup>106</sup> "Wie wohl haben Deine Schriftzüge nach so langer, langer Zeit gethan. Kind, es gibt nicht Zeit, nicht Entfernung, nicht Erlebnis für das was Dir mein Herz gelobt hat." Ibid., letter of February 8, 1859.

the harmonic shifts from D-flat major to C minor and wallowed in their overwhelming sadness. That Joachim ends with this “c” theme marks the Neapolitan harmony, retrospectively, as even more meaningful. But just three measures before concluding this elegy, Joachim adds another hint about the story he tells in this movement: a transposition of the G-sharp-E-A cipher, whereby the whole note G sounds concurrently with b and c trilling above (Ex. 100).



**Example 100, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante*, B-G-C (Transposition of G-sharp-E-A) in the Solo Violin Part**

Before we take a moment to reflect on the events and their implications in the year of publication (1889), one analytical level has to be reconsidered in our discussion, namely, the element of form. Moser’s discussion of the G-major Concerto suggests a plausible interpretation of the second movement but unequivocally contextualizes it with the death of the “heimgegangene Freundin” in 1889, although he knew about the work’s first Hanover performance in 1864 (even if, like Borchard, he wrote of “heavy revisions”). But apparently, like Borchard, not knowing the copyist’s score from 1878,

Moser did not raise the baffling and highly unusual question of why a funeral march would have been composed while the dedicatee was still alive:

The second movement is a captivating lament in the character of a funeral march, as if an elegy on the death of the departed friend. In the middle of the movement the dark curtain of clouds is gradually moved to the side, and as if from a clear blue heaven there descends consoling and mild, a transfigured being of light that gently whispers to us that calm and peace are on the other side! This A-flat major passage belongs to the most beautiful ever written for the violin.<sup>107</sup>

Moser mentions the otherworldly beautiful A-flat major section, which he compares, as in the first movement, to a religious symbol of the hereafter, possibly hinting at Gisela being the “Lichtgestalt.” In light of the chronology of events, however, an interpretation of the work’s five-part form seems warranted – curious enough in a slow movement that emphasizes the idea of a *Denkmal* for the relationship, not just for Gisela. After all, her loss meant for Joachim not only the loss of his “Wahlverwandte” but also of his ideal(ized) personification of the female as well as of his best friend, and, perhaps above all, the loss of one of his most significant sources of energy and inspiration for composing. She had initiated whatever transported Joachim to the state of mind uniquely suited for “detecting and saving” the “Empfindungen,” whereby

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<sup>107</sup> “Der zweite Satz ist ein ergreifender Klagegesang im Charakter eines Trauermarsches, gewissermaßen die Elegie auf den Tod der heimgegangenen Freundin. In der Mitte des Satzes schiebt sich allmählich der düstere Wolkenvorhang zur Seite, und wie aus klarblauem Himmel senkt sich tröstend und mild eine verklärte Lichtgestalt hernieder, die uns leise zuflüstert, daß im Jenseits Ruh’ und Frieden! Diese As-Dur Stelle gehört zu dem Schönsten, was je für die Geige geschrieben worden ist.” Moser, *Joseph Joachim. Ein Lebensbild*, II:90.

emotions were as much part of what was brought to his awareness as “unwillkürlich” perceived tones, leading to compositional productivity.

If we review the thematically and harmonically most conspicuous sections in this movement – along the idea of our hybrid form tending toward rondo – we see that overall the selection of keys outlines a union of G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E, wedded together and yet darkened through transposition to C minor, yielding the following trajectory (Fig. 21):

A		A'	B	A	C		A'	A''
m. 1	m.17	m. 25	m. 36	m. 63	m. 81-89	m. 89	m. 93	m. 101
<b>C minor</b> (P)	G major	C minor	<b>A-flat major</b>	C minor	<b>D-flat major/</b> C minor	C minor	<b>F minor</b> (P)	<b>C minor</b>

**Figure 21, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante*,  
Main Key Relationships**

The full harmonic outline of the movement is summarized below (Figure 22) but it becomes clear from the main thematic and harmonic events that A-flat major (scale degree VI), D-flat major (lowered II), and F minor (iv), alternate with C minor, thus creating an idiosyncratic and allusive form, which, however, remains somewhat removed from the foreground as various formal sections present some obstacles in the way.

Measures	Formal function	Key	Motivic material	Overall Form
mm. 1-4	Orchestral introduction	C minor		
mm. 5-12	Primary theme (P)	<b>C minor</b>	A	A
mm. 13-16	Primary theme	C minor		



	continuation			
mm. 17-20	Theme (different from P)	G major	B	
mm. 21-24	Modulation			
mm. 25-32	Return of primary theme (first measure varied), same continuation	C minor	a'	A
mm. 33-35	Orchestral interlude, new theme, from consequent of P	C minor	C	
mm. 36-51	Theme	<b>A-flat major</b>	D	B
mm. 52-62	Modulation to G (dominant of C minor)			
mm. 63-69	Return of primary theme (but without last measure cadence)	C minor	a''	A'
mm. 70-74	Modulation to D-flat major			
mm. 75-80	Theme (as m. 17)	<b>D-flat major</b>	b'	
mm. 81-85	Theme (as m. 33)	D-flat major mod. to C minor	c'	C
mm. 85-89	Theme (imitation of m. 81)	D-flat major mod. to C minor	c''	
mm. 93-96	P	<b>F minor</b>	a'	A'
mm. 97-100	Mod. to C minor			
mm. 101-110	Theme	<b>C minor</b>	c'	A''

Figure 22, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, *Andante*, Detailed Formal Outline

Possibly Joachim did not want to reveal as openly as in *Abendglocken* the underlying meaning of the movement. For the general public who knew Gisela von Arnim, Joachim's second movement would have represented a natural reaction in 1889 – especially for those who knew what she had meant to Joachim in the 1850s. But considering the chronology, it is understandable why Joachim, in the early 1860s, would not have written a funeral march openly exposing the G-sharp-E-A ciphers – after all a circle of musical friends, including Clara Schumann and Woldemar Bargiel, knew all about this cipher game. This reticence may be one reason why he concealed clear allusions to Gisela, and, in the larger scheme, why he did not publish the work for more than two decades. Another reason could have been that in 1862 Joachim met and became engaged to the singer Amalie Schneeweiss, whom he married in 1863,<sup>108</sup> although Amalie and Joseph Joachim divorced in the 1880s, which changed, yet again, Joachim's view of Gisela.

In 1889, after Gisela's death, Rudolf Grimm, Herman's brother, wrote to Joachim about the Violin Concerto in G Major and Herman and Gisela Grimm: "Yesterday I spoke with Herman about the matter, and relate to you what he said to me: 'I am very sorry that I cannot see Joachim, it would shatter me too much; I really can't do it, I must hold together all my paltry strength for the lectures. Gisela always remained his friend:

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<sup>108</sup> Borchard, "Der Geiger-König und seine Königin," in *Stimme und Geige*, 239.

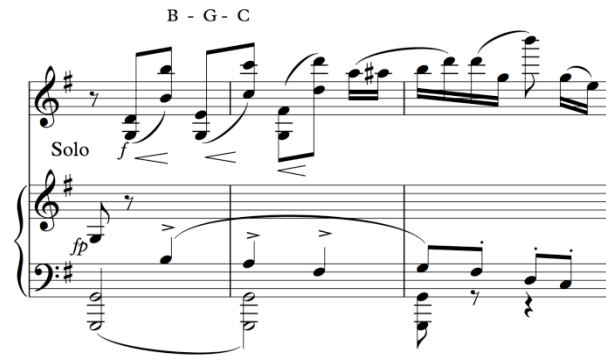
just to reassure Joachim on this point, I expressed it in the foreword.”<sup>109</sup> Herman had written, in the month after Gisela’s death, the foreword to Gisela’s drama *Alt-Schottland*, published in 1890, where he alluded to Joachim, in order to break the decade-long silence that had separated Joachim from Gisela and Herman since 1872. One passage in the “Vorrede” reads: “She actually sent only four copies [of the freshly printed book with an edition of eight copies that Gisela wanted to send to her best friends]: to Herr von Keudell in Berlin, to Frau Spemann in Stuttgart, to Fräulein von Schorn in Weimar, and to Joseph Joachim, whom she knew from her earliest times, and to whom she always remained a true friend.”<sup>110</sup> When Gisela died, Joachim received the letters he had sent her throughout his life, while the majority of her letters to him, which Joachim had returned to her, were burned by Herman, according to her wishes, after her death.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> “Ich habe gestern mit Herman über die Sache gesprochen [“Sache” means here, presumably, the intended public dedication of the G major concerto to Gisela Grimm, who died on April 4, 1889] und theile Dir kurz mit, was er mir sagte: Es ist mir sehr leid, daß ich Joachim nicht sehen kann, es würde mich zu sehr erschüttern: ich kann es wirklich nicht, ich muss all mein bisschen Kraft für die Vorlesungen zusammenhalten. Gisel ist immer seine Freundin geblieben: gerade um Joachim in dieser Beziehung Gewissheit zu geben, habe ich das in der Vorrede ausgesprochen.” *Joachim Briefe*, III:353, letter of May 1889.

<sup>110</sup> “Nur vier Kopien [des Frisch-gedruckten Buches auf einer Auflage von acht Kopien, die Gisela ihren besten Freunden schicken wollte] sandte sie wirklich ab: an Herrn von Keudell in Berlin, an Frau Spemann in Stuttgart, an Fräulein von Schorn in Weimar und an Joseph Joachim, den sie von seinen frühesten Zeiten ab gekannt und dem sie stets eine treue Freundin geblieben.” Herman Grimm, “Vorrede” to *Alt-Schottland* [written Easter 1889, shortly after Gisela’s death] (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1890), XIX.

If we summarize the allusions that may have to do with Gisela, even if some are so subtle that they might be coincidental, the three notes b-g-c at the end of the funeral march in the solo violin are most closely related to the G-sharp-E-A cipher. But the third movement – a robust rondo – also adds two more cipher-like allusions. In the opening of the solo violin part in the third movement, the cipher – again transposed to b-g-c – is part of a virtuosic and bold gesture (Ex. 101).



**Example 101, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Third Movement, First Solo (mm. 7-9)**

A similar motive returns in the French horn close to the end (Ex. 101):




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<sup>111</sup> Epilogue of Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 177.

**Example 102, Joachim, Violin Concerto in G Major WoO, Third Movement  
(mm. 345-347)**

These allusions in the second and third movements – in addition to the subtle harmonic structure of G-sharp-E-A and F-A-E (transposed) – seem much less conspicuous than the ciphers in *Abendglocken* and Joachim's other cipher pieces.<sup>112</sup> What this concerto, instead, suggests, is, after all, not so much an *Andenken* or *Denkmal* as a process of remembering. It begins with quotations of Bettine's song (with Achim's text suppressed) – treated and perhaps synthesized through Joachim's improvisatory ornamental "scale"-like figures, then follows the G-sharp-E-A cipher transposed to B-G-C and veiled at the end of the second movement before Joachim offers, in the third movement, two more conspicuous (because more compact) transposed cipher allusions. The B-G-C emerges in the violin's entrance in the opening of the finale (Ex. 101) and then again in a coda-like passage near the end of the movement (Ex. 102), bringing the "memory" of Gis-E-[L]A into sharper focus.

Joachim's violin concerto signifies his personal loss, offering an autobiographical account in tones, expressed most clearly in the funeral march written, presumably, long before her death. The many allusions to more subtle versions of G-sharp-E-A make clear that the dedicatee was – as in *Abendglocken*, the overtures, and, in fact, most compositions

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<sup>112</sup> See Ch. 1, p. 62.

of the 1850s – Gisela. However, with the passing of time even in 1860 Gis-E-[L]A was already a “memory,” which the composer briefly reanimated for the last time. The full meaning of the Violin Concerto in G Major emerges in the light of “psychological music” as a compositional approach. Because Gisela was Joachim’s main source of inspiration she was for several years in large part the initiator of his creativity, which allowed his compositional energies to flow in ways apparently not possible otherwise. He expressed this dependence in many ways (“detecting and saving the emotions from the abyss,” allowing the emotions to come out exactly as perceived, not altering them, even believing in their truthfulness and fatalistic necessity). In sum, the *Stimmung* he needed for composing was somehow made possible through her – and by letting himself be completely immersed in the mental/emotional state of Gisela-*Stimmung*, Joachim composed – with her help – by literally drawing the tones from his inner world. In 1854 he offered a candid pictorial description of the symbiosis he felt between them, offering an image we can confidently call an instruction manual of “psychological music,” although he wrote it just to Gisela:

Only friend—how I rejoice at seeing you again—what inexpressible fortune to love you! O come soon—should I say to you that I look forward to you with all my being—that every day I mean that I could not have loved you enough the previous day—that I always understand you more purely, you marvelous soul! Good, beautiful, serious, true, lovely, you all in all! [. . .] Your little cauldron simmers rather loud; if I did not peek within, I would think there were busy bees entering the honeycomb of your loving care. Would that my heart were a glass

beehive, and you could see how busily, without rest, honey was gathered for you.<sup>113</sup>

Even if using fairy-tale-like terms drawn from children's books, this quotation gives us a metaphor of how Joachim perceived his process of "producing." The way he imagined Gisela as part of his creativity – and honey in the quotation above can only allude to Joachim's music – shows a symbiotic flow of energy, through which Joachim could compose. If Schumann's and Bettine's accounts perhaps can be compared to the role of Clara in Robert's composition, Joachim's situation with Gisela, due to his personality, emotionality, and idiosyncratic mode of creativity, which strongly responded to his *Stimmung*, seems different. Gisela's defining role was that she was *Psyche* – Joachim's muse – at the same time that she was his beloved. Once she left, Joachim lost his zeal for composition, and evidently the circumstances and surroundings of the next decades could neither re-energize nor reclaim his psychological creativity of the 1850s.

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<sup>113</sup> "Einzigste Freundin – wie freue ich mich auf's Wiedersehen – welch unaussprechlich Glück Dich zu lieben! O komm bald – soll ich Dir sagen, dass ich Dir mit all meinem Sein entgegensehne – dass ich jeden Tag meine, ich könnte Dich am vorigen nicht genug geliebt haben – dass ich Dich immer reiner verstehe Du herrliche Seele! Gute, schöne, ernste, treue, liebliche, Du Alles in Allem! [...] Dein Kesselchen summt recht laut; wenn ich nicht hinsehe, mein ich es wären geschäftige Bienen, die den Honigseim Deiner liebenden Sorgfalt eintragen. Wäre mein Herz doch ein gläserner Bienenkorb, und Du könntest sehen wie geschäftig da rastlos für Dich Honig zugetragen wird." Joachim, *Joachims Briefe an Gisela von Arnim*, 66, letter of October 20, 1854.





## Appendix A

### Part I:

Manuscript letter Hs-#10472a is one significant piece of evidence about Gisela's frequenting of ballet master Paul Taglioni's performances in Berlin and from which, in turn, we see how she informed Joachim about the choreographic details that she envisioned as the next steps before the composed music and her written pantomime could be performed on stage.

Hs-#10472a consists of a letter of three leaves (six pages) and is dated "ca. 1857" (added in a different hand). Gisela's seal is used on the first page of the letter in the upper left corner and displays an image of the Psyche head. Attached to this letter is one sheet titled "Pantomime." The letter and pantomimesheet read as follows:

"Dear Joachim! Here in greatest hurry the news about my conversation with ballet master Taglioni, a very entertaining [man]. I was in the parlor of Miss Taglioni, who was sitting on some kind of stage by the window, and thus exposed delicately to the views ([they] are, by the way, decorous people, - and so on). No time. Today there was much translation urgency. The earlier you finish your music the better the synchronization. Herr Taglioni says, you should imagine the plot and divide it into measures – or let someone from the [local] ballet imitate the movements of Psyche for you as they are written here [attached "pantomime" sheet] – and that you divide up into measures. –

You will have to laugh, in fact, but you can transfigure that into the soulfulness of Psyche when she catches sight of Amor – everything in art is, indeed, based on transfiguration [.] Therefore go ahead and laugh heartily, the people are used to such things, and when someone mentions it to you [the collaboration] you can just say that you are composing it for a party. The scheme

that you can use I am attaching herewith, - Herr Taglioni seemed to think, by the way, that all of this was not very difficult and here at home mother and Armgart, as well as myself, also think you would be able to do this, if you just imagine the movements – it seems simple to me – it is, mind you, not a dance but a pantomime, if you don't mind composing music merely for occasional movements [of the actress]. – You cannot imagine with what diligence and perseverance I have invested in things like these translation stories [i.e. projects]. Oh, in thinking of you I would have loved to see *Armide*, - but could not. Farewell you heart, you soul – When will I see you? – you do not have to respond if you do not want to – G.

P.S. this letter is sealed with an antique bust of Psyche, which is your reward for Psyche, your seal seemed too big [grand] [to be used] for forever [F. A. E.] and I give you this small head as a gift until I find something that fits you completely, - although it [the seal] is not as spiritual, narrow and bright as I would imagine it in contrast to the earthly beauty of Venus, it is nevertheless fresh, pure and brave, and for those days it is spiritual."

(Lieber Joachim! Anbei in größter Eile die Nachricht über mein Gespräch mit Herrn Balletmeister Taglioni, ein sehr unterhaltender [Mann], – ich war in der Stube von Fräulein Taglioni, welche auf einer Art Bühne am Fenster sitzt, und so den Blicken zierlichst ausgestellt (sind übrigens als anständige Leute bekannt, – u.s.f.). Keine Zeit. Heute war auch lauter Übersetzungshast. [...] Je eher du deine Musik vollendest je besser die Umsetzung. Herr Taglioni sagt, du müßtest dir die Handlung denken und sie in Takte theilen – oder dir von irgendeinem Subject die Bewegungen am Ballet, die Bewegungen der Psyche [...] nachahmen lässt [?] wie sie hier stehn [i.e. in the "Pantomime" sheet attached, see below], – und das in Takte theilen, –

Du wirst zwar lachen müssen doch kannst du das ja in die Seligkeit der Psyche beim Erblicken Amors verklären – es beruht doch alles in der Kunst auf Verklärung also lache nur herzlich, die Leute überwiegend sind dergleichen gewöhnt und du brauchst wenn es dir genannt bloss zu sagen, du wollest es für die Aufführung in einer Gesellschaft etwas componieren. – Das Schema das du zeigen kannst lege ich hier bei, – Herr Taglioni schien übrigens dies alles nicht für sehr schwierig zu halten er meinte wenn der Komponist nur nicht zu lange machte, und du hier im Haus Mutter und Armgart, wie ich meinen auch du würdest das können, wenn du dir nur die Bewegungen vorstellst – mir scheint es auch egal – es ist ja kein Tanz sondern Pantomime, wenn dir Musik nur an

momentanen Bewegungen nicht widerstrebt. — Du kannst nicht denken welchen Fleiß welch Ausdauer ich an diese Übersetzungsgeschichten wie heut [investiert] [...].

[...] Ach in Gedanken an dich hätte ich neulich noch lieber die Armide gesehen, — aber ich konnte nicht. Lebewohl du Herz, du Seele — wann seh ich dich — du brauchts nichts zu sagen. Wenn du nicht willst. — G.

P.S. Dieser Brief wird mit einem antiken Psychenköpfchen gesiegelt welches dir zum Lohn bestimmt ist für die Psyche, dein Symbol kam mir zu groß für immer vor [F a e seal] und ich schenke dir dies Köpfchen [i.e. the seal] bis ich etwas finde was ganz für dich passt, - wenn es auch nicht so geistig schmal und hell ist wie ich mir als Gegensatz zur irdischen Schönheit der Venus Psychen denke, so ist es doch frisch rein kühn und für damalige Zeit vergeistigt ist. Die Sage der Psyche ist sicher eine der göttlichsten Liebesgeschichten die es auf Erden giebt — [...].)

## Part II

“Pantomime” sheet, Hs#10472a (“libretto”)

This letter, from Gisela to Joachim, is housed in the *Freies Deutsches Hochstift* (Goethe Archive) Frankfurt and is undated (with a “suggested date” of “ca. 1857,” which seems questionable; see Ch. 4, fn. 88). The letter is titled “Pantomime” and contains the whole myth of “Cupid and Psyche” in Gisela’s rendition. Gisela’s letter, in its entirety, reads:

“Pantomime”

Performed by only one person; the others are only to be imagined, etc. Psyche sits next to the sleeping Amor. It is night, smiling happily about his

lovely story before he fell asleep – suddenly her suspicions again arise in her heart that her sisters had again [crossed out] awakened in her, since she has never seen him, that her husband is a monster. She chooses to illuminate him, points to a lamp, then shakes her head – once again her suspicions, she listens to his breathing, stands up, she hesitates, lights the lamp, turns back hesitating, pausing, – finally she approaches with the lamp, the first beam that falls on him shows his lovely countenance – she recognizes a god who loves her, he will bear her up, her joy, her bliss exceed all bounds, she points above, and so forth, then her joy yields to childish pleasure, she touches him, his wings, she wants to bend over him, to kiss him, the lamp falls from her hands, Amor awakens, – she is beyond herself over his rage, kneels on the ground, averts his glances. She wants to hold him, but he flies away. Her despair – then she decides to search for him, and now circles the stage in pantomime three times, looking for him, and then lamenting her grief, and with empty eyes looking everywhere for him, she finally becomes exhausted, feels her soul and reaches for Venus, which she examines, since she was found to be more lovely than the goddess. Psyche stands full of humility, promises to do everything to regain Amor, but points fearfully to the ground, as it says to her, she should go to the underworld to collect something. She expresses her dread about the shades, the Furies, she imitates the bearing of the Danaïdes, and throws Cerberus some bread, then she reaches the king of the underworld, receives the decanter for Venus, and returns with her hair let down, now accustomed to all terror, slowly and sublimely back, and finally gives the goblet to Nero.”

“Psyche sitzt neben dem entschlafenen Amor, es ist Nacht, freudig lächelnd über seine liebliche Erzählung, eh er einschlief – plötzlich dringt ihr der Argwohn wieder ins Herz, den die Schwestern wieder [crossed out] in ihr erweckt, da sie ihn nie gesehen, der Gatte sei ein Ungeheuer. Sie beschließt ihn zu beleuchten, deutet auf eine Lampe, dann schüttelt sie mit dem Kopf, – wieder kömmt der Argwohn, sie lauscht auf seine Atemzüge, sie steht auf, sie zögert, sie entzündet die Lampe, kehrt zögernd zurück, innehaltend, – Endlich nähert sie sich mit der Lampe, Der erste Strahl, der auf ihn fällt, zeigt sein schönes Antlitz, – sie erkennt einen Gott, indem der sie liebt, er wird sie aufwärts tragen, ihre Freude ihre Seligkeit übersteigen alle Grenzen, sie deutet empor, usf, dann geht ihre Freude in kindliches Vergnügen über, sie betastet ihn, seine Flügel, sie will sich zu ihm beugen, ihn zu küssen, die Lampe entstürzt ihren Händen, Amor erwacht, – sie ist außer sich über seinen Zorn, kniet am Boden, wehrt

seine Blicke ab,. — Sie will ihn halten, aber er entfliegt. Ihre Verzweiflung — dann beschließt sie ihn zu suchen, und umkreist nun drei mal, im pantomimischen Tanz, die Bühne überall nach ihm spähend, und dann ihren Jammer klagend, und mit leeren Augen nach ihm ausschauend, sie ermüdet zuletzt ganz, befühlte ihre Sehlee [sic] [Seele?] und langt nun bei der Venus an, welche sie verhört, weil sie Schöner gefunden ward als die Göttin. Psyche steht demutsvoll, verspricht alles zu tun, um Amor zu erlangen, deutet aber schaudernd auf den Boden, als jene ihr sagt, sie solle in die Unterwelt gehen, ihr etwas zu holen,. — Sie sagt, ihr Entsetzen über die Schatten, die Furien, sie ahmt die Gebärden der Danaiden nach, und wirft dem Cerberus die Fladen zu, — dann langt sie beim König der Unterwelt an, erhält das Gefäß für Venus, und kehrt mit herabhängenden Haaren, alle Schrecken gewöhnt, langsam und erhaben zurück, und überreicht zum Schluss den Becher dem Nero.”

### Part III

Apuleius’s version of the play (125-after 170 A.D.), which existed, in the 1850s, in translation,<sup>114</sup> is summarized below:

Apuleius tells the story of Psyche, an otherworldly beautiful girl and the youngest of three sisters, who, however, cannot find someone to marry. Venus, naturally envious at her beauty, which distracts more and more people from her (i.e. Venus), sends her son to make Psyche magically fall in love with the ugliest creature possible. Cupid, with help of Apollo, devises a plan; she is brought to Cupid’s realms, a kind of paradise, where he falls in love with her and visits her each night. Psyche, although

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<sup>114</sup> August Rode, *Der Goldne Esel, aus dem Lateinischen des Apulejus*. Zweiter Theil (Selbstverlag, 1783).

having been prohibited from telling her sisters about Cupid or seeing his appearance, breaks a promise—lured by her sisters who said he was some kind of monster, as foretold by an oracle the father had consulted. Psyche believes them and decides to reveal his appearance one night with a lamp. But some oil from her lamp falls on him—Amor the God of love—who leaves immediately. Psyche sets off to look for him, longing and desperate to be reunited, but Venus has heard of Psyche’s betrayal and, angry and determined to destroy her rival, sends Psyche on an impossible mission to the underworld. But with some magical support, Psyche is able to fulfill her tasks and is eventually reunited with Cupid, who, by giving Psyche ambrosia, makes her immortal. She can then officially marry Cupid, and Venus eventually gives her blessings to the union of Cupid and Psyche, love and soul.

#### Part IV

Precedents for musical (stage) works on “Cupid and Psyche” or portions of “Cupid and Psyche”:<sup>115</sup>

Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Ouverture de Psyché* (1671, written for five-part string ensemble and singer, after Pierre Corneille and Jean Baptiste Molière’s comedy-ballet);

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<sup>115</sup> Donald M. Poduska, “Classical Myth in Music: A Selective List,” *The Classical World* 92, No. 3 (1999): 262-263.

Matthew Locke, *Psyche* (1675, vocal music for Thomas Shadwell's *Psyche* or *The English Opera* on Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*); Karl Friedrich Münchler, *Psyche* (1789, a Singspiel);<sup>116</sup> K. Wiedemann, *Amor und Psyche* (1815, drama with music, lost);<sup>117</sup> Karl Friedrich Werlich, *Amor und Psyche* (1818, a lyrical drama);<sup>118</sup> Niels Gade, *Psyche* (1881-82, a cantata for soloists, chorus, and orchestra); César Franck, *Psyché* (1886, a symphonic poem for chorus and orchestra); Camille Saint-Saëns, *Airs de Ballet d'Ascanio* (1890, a variation for flute from his opera's Act 3 ballet divertissement depicting Cupid's appearance to Psyche); Manuel de Falla, *Psyché* (1924, for voice, flute, harp, and string trio on a text by G. Jean-Aubry); Lord Berners (Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson), *Cupid and Psyche: Suite* (1939, from the music for a ballet on Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*); Paul Hindemith, *Cupid and Psyche: Overture to a Ballet* (1943, a work for a never-written ballet on Apuleius's story as depicted in paintings at the Villa Farnesina in Rome); Erik Bergman, *The Singing Tree* (1988, an opera on a Swedish fairy tale of Prince Halt in the Nether World traced to Apuleius's story); Thomas Sleeper, *Eros et Psyche, Prometheus et Psyche* (1992, the second and third movements of his Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra).

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<sup>116</sup> Listed in Holm, *Amor und Psyche*, 19.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

Part V

*Das Herz der Laïs.* (Drama in einem Akt. Für Signora Ristori geschrieben und ihr gewidmet.) Bonn: Eduard Weber, 1857.

Pantomime scene, pp. 298-319 (gaps marked in brackets [...]). English translation (trans. Uhde) and German original below.

**The Slave:**

Laïs! Please, for me!

**Laïs:**

But how should I plead, - it annoys the emperor, he will hang me.

**The Slave:**

So dance.

**Laïs:**

My heart is too big.

**The Slave:**

Laïs! [not bold]

(emperor enters)



**Laïs:**

Well – now go!

**The Slave:**

Dear me, the emperor!

(He hides in front, on the side in the curtains next to the altar, so that the audience sees how he follows everything that happens from here on.)

**Third Scene**

**Nero. The house master. The previous.**

[...]

**Laïs:**

I have a request, Lord.

(She is on the stage far away from Nero, and approaches him as she speaks; as he speaks she humbly kneels down.)

**Nero:**

Oh please spare me your whining, or the underworld shall swallow you.

**Laïs:**

(walking one step)

**Nero:**

So?

**Laïs:**

(alternating between approaching him and standing still)

You hold a slave. The slave broke a vase next to your gently perceiving ear. You ordered that, as usual with delinquents, he shall die before sunset. Let the slave live.

(She kneels.)

**Nero:**

Folly, girl; no. He made my ear hurt.

**Laïs:**

(getting up)

Your ear, accustomed to blustering fights, should be stronger.

[...]

**Nero:**

(tensed)

Now Laïs

**Laïs:**

Oh the emperor is glorious, great is the emperor [...]

**Nero:**

Well, delightful Laïs.

**Laïs:**

When you found me for the first time under that blooming tree, when you first  
kissed me, Nero –

(incredibly charming) Let the slave live.

[...]

**Nero:**

By Jupiter, he will die.

**The Slave:**

(from the side)

Laïs, Laïs, Laïs!

**Laïs:**

(increasingly devoted)

So then, I will dance to cheer you up, Nero.

[...]

**Nero:**

(indifferent, while she quickly gets ready to dance, near the slave and the chairs,  
and opposite Nero)

Think of your big heart, oh Laïs!

**Laïs:**

Open your eyes, my emperor, and see how this big heart understands how to dance and to jump.

Do you remember when I once listened as Antonio told the story of Psyche to the sounds of the Lyre? What I then felt is what I would like to dance for you now.

Psyche, the king's daughter, has been married to an unknown man, does not know that he is a god, because he only stayed near her by night.

Oh dear, now! The sisters, who visited her in the loneliness, put into her heart the suspicion that he was a monster and that she shall, against his orders, try to view him secretly. (She throws all her jewelry to the ground and looks transformed as she stands in her simple white gown.)

Pay attention, Amor fell asleep, intoxicated from his beauty, from his sweet speech, she listens to his breathing (she performs a pantomime sitting on the ground); then the gruesome thought returns, which the sisters have put in her heart. – You have never seen him; he is a monster.

(Lais startles, then she shakes her head and listens again, her face full of bliss; she lifts her hand to her ear to listen even more closely to his breath – suddenly the dark

thought again through her visage, she quietly stands up, sneaking away, and returning with a lamp from the altar, with which she approaches shyly the place where Amor, according to her perception, is resting.)

**The house master:**

Oh, suitable! See, oh emperor, Psyche comes with the lamp and seeks to view her husband, feminine curiosity written in her face.

**Nero:**

(nods in a measured way)

(Lais [Psyche] approaches Amor closer and closer, her foot twitches, as if she wanted to return, - suddenly a beam of light falls onto Amor's visage, his beauty shines like a lightning through her soul; she recognizes that he is a god. The change of movements, the intimate gratefulness to the gods with a soulfulness, which almost carries her heavenward, is indescribable.)

**The house master:**

(sedate and absorbed)

She recognized in Amor a god instead of a beast. –

[...]

**The house master:**

The small, round Laïs, just now she was gloomy and sad, smiles so brightly, so sweetly at the sight of her husband [...]. The laughing sounds as if before this girl's soul truly there stood a god. – See, now Laïs's joy turns into playfulness, she touches hesitantly his wings, she backs off, - she is beyond herself in joy and tears flow over her glowing face, that a god loves her, carries her heavenward, oh this pride.

**Nero:**

Pride! – folly.

**The house master:**

Oh wonderful, how unusual this girl looks, the passion seems so powerfully awakened in her, that I admit I could never feel as such, and it seemed to me entirely impossible until today what I am now seeing.

[...]

(Suddenly Laïs holds the lamp over him, holding her breath, to kiss him; the lamp falls out of her hand, she backs away. One sees that she kneels and trembles before him as he jumps up.)

**House master:**

– And Amor has flown away; she does not speak, she does not lament, but all the joy from his being near, tremendous joy, even if he swears, slowly leaves her noble and proud demeanor, and her whole visage seems empty. –

(Laïs lies on the ground lamenting, her pain, her passion; she decides to search for him, raises and dances around the stage three times in a raging, painful, pantomimic dance, as if it were a desert, - soon she stands and looks around hopefully, as if she did not see anything anywhere, - then she pleadingly walks on.)

**The house master:**

See – see – soon she is here, soon there [...]

(Laïs rushes further, soon a glimpse of hope shines through her, and soon it is lost, now her feet hurt, and sinks down.)

[...]

(Again she rises up, goes on and on, - she moans to the stars; she asks the deserted rocks, the forest, who only respond in their deserted sounds of nature; she exhaustedly asks for help, which she does not find, and finally, more and more exhausted, she seems to reach a goal.)

**The house master:**

(as if entirely carried forth)

Now she comes to Venus, and asks for him, - is it not so, - and she will order her to get the box from Proserpina from the underworld, then she shall have Amor, if curiosity does not let her open the box.

See how Venus despises her, how the courting beauty looks so sassy at innocence, which her son and the people found even more beautiful than the mother's rich being. Doesn't one see in Psyche's face what she is thinking.

[...]

**The house master:**

[...]

Oh, she becomes so innocent, - the good Laïs, as if she had never touched anything evil. Purer, brighter than Venus, when she once upon a time ascended from the sea [...].

Laïs (stands breathing, says to herself sarcastically)

Innocent I might become because I think how this innocence would please a god,  
- whom Laïs never saw.

[...]

(Laïs dances. Her shyness before Venus, she is frightened when the latter deceives her, submissively she would like to do anything to regain Amor. When Venus orders her to leave, she [Laïs] expresses this by pointing to the ground [the underworld])



with an inquiring demeanor. Shuddering, she decides to descend. Her path, her terror, shadows begin surrounding her, her terror almost turns into fury, - Cerberus, she imitates with her hand his shape and with her face his voracity, acts as if throwing something to him. She imitates the movements of the Danaïdes, who continuously refill their perforated containers, this nameless astonishment and misery in their faces – the furies. Full of sense-bereaving horror about the experience of receiving [at the altar] the box of from the king of the underworld.)

[...]

**The house master:**

Oh the furies, in order to find the god, Psyche does everything.

[...]

(Laïs sinks to the ground in front of the emperor, opens the box and gives him a few roses.)

**Nero:**

What do you wish as a gift in return for your beauty, woman, girl! You play better than I thought. Ask for half of my kingdom, I am in a good mood to grant your wishes.

**Laïs:**

(who has gotten up and stepped back a few steps, suddenly she stops – broken and out of breath, but divine.)

The slave!

[...]

**Laïs:**

(sitting up; the box glides out of her hand.)

The game is not yet over, oh Nero! From the box of the underworld evil steams emanate, you know; they bring much sorrow. (She looks around, as if dizzy.)

Psyche dies – but Amor wakes her up again.

[...]

Nero, I am dying for this world; the god of love wakes me for another world – let the slave live. (Laïs collapses and dies.)

[play continues, Nero frees the slave]

**Excerpt from Gisela von Arnim, *Das Herz der Laïs***

**(German), pp. 298-319**

**Der Kaiser:**

Nun Laïs?

**Laïs:**

Ich habe eine Bitte, Herr.

(Sie ist vom Nero ganz entfernt auf der Bühne, und geht meist, wenn sie spricht, auf ihn zu; sowie er redet, kniet sie demüthig nieder.)

**Nero:**

Nun?

**Laïs** (abwechselnd auf ihn zugehend und wieder stillstehend):

Du hast einen Sklaven. Der Sklave zerbrach eine Vase neben deinem zartfühlenden Ohr. Du befahlst, er solle wie gewöhnlich die Verbrecher vor dem Untergang der Sonne sterben. Laß den Sklaven leben. (Sie kniet.)

**Nero:**

Narrheit, Mädchen; nein. Er machte mein Ohr schmerzen.

**Laïs** (aufstehend):

Dein Ohr, das Kämpfe dröhnen hörte, sollte stärker sein.

Und er ist jung und wollhaarig, wie ein Lamm das den ersten Frühling begrüßt,  
er hat sich noch nicht auf der Wiese ausgesprungen, die Beine versprungen, – wie ich.

(Sie kniet demüthig, die lichten Ärmchen über der Brust gefaltet.)

**Nero** (wüthend):

Daß dich dieser und jener Blitz verzehre, ich will nicht; was bringst du mich aus  
der Laune, Hündin? – Liebst du den Narren?

**Laïs** (immer noch kniend):

Du weißt wohl, o Kaiser, daß mich dann dein Blick eh'r wie der Blitz von der  
Erde wegfräße.

(Sie steht auf und geht, beide Händchen erhoben, bittend auf ihn zu.)

O laß ihn leben; o kleiner guter Nero, laß ihn leben. Laß mich dich nennen, wie  
du mir einst an der Schulter lagst, und ich dem kaiserlichen Blutsauger die Haare kraute  
– Nerochen.

**Nero:**

Beim Jupiter!

**Laïs:**

Ja der ist so mächtig und groß wie du.

**Nero:**

Noch etwas weiter reicht seine Macht.

**Laïs:**

Siehst du, du lächelst wieder.

(Sie bleibt plötzlich stehen, mit dem Blick nach oben, und die Händchen bittend emporgehoben, wie sich in der windstillen Sommerzeit auch öfter einzelne Blättchen an einem stillen Baume ahnend regen.)

O Kaiser, o um alles, laß ihn leben, den armen Knaben! – –

Weißt du noch damals als ich dich zum ersten Male sah? – –

Weißt du noch damals im Frühling als ich vor meiner Mutter Hause spielte. – Sie wusch, die langen weißen Laken kelterten an den Büschen hinab im Sonnenschein, und die Zweigelchen streckten noch einzeln ihre nackten Ärmchen aus, und baten den hellen Himmel um grüne Kleidung.

Da fuhr der Kaiser vorüber, seine Rosse stieben im Glanz, und warfen kräftig aus und berührten den frischen Kies, der Kutscher schlug ein. Des Kaisers Haare aber flogen im Wind, und seine Backen waren fest und hart wie die Lenden des Sonnengottes.

So fuhr er öfter vorüber, und die Leute versteckten sich vor seinem Glanz, denn der konnte tödten. Nur meine Mutter versteckte sich nicht, sie war eine arme Witwe, was hatte die zu fürchten? –

Sie sang dann emsiger ihr Lied, guckte vor sich her auf die Arbeit und ich sah staunend, unter den Büschen vor, den stierbösen Kaiser an.

An jenem Tage aber wehten Mantel und Zügel und die Wagendecken  
durcheinander, ich wußte es nicht, doch der Kaiser schritt auf den Hof zu.

Da riß er mich am Gürtel empor, und Männerarme umschlossen mich. Ich hatte  
unter einem blühenden Baume gestanden, und ihn zum Scherz geschüttelt, seine  
Blüthen rannen an meiner schmalen Gestalt hinab, und fanden noch kaum ein Plätzchen  
sich zu halten. Nero schüttelte sie ab und küßte mich. Ich wurde zum ersten Male roth –  
kam's aus mir selber, oder war es weil sein Haar mich deckte und wärmte.

Mir war als seufzten alle die Blüthen am Baume über mir, und die Sonne hätte  
sie zum ersten Male geküßt. –

Er schwang mich über die Schulter, der Kaiser, und schritt davon. Ich saß, ich lag  
halb in seinen Gewändern neben ihm im Wagen. Meine Mutter! – meine Mutter! – mir  
war's als hätte sie starr gestanden – schrie laut auf – ich möchte mich's heute noch  
entsinnen, was es war, und kann nicht und wenn ich's mich recht entsinne war es  
"Verloren"! Warum nannte sie es nur verloren; – ja, ja sie hatte mich verloren. Der  
Nachbar links hinter der Wand, dessen Stimme ich wohl kannte, sagte er nicht: "Er  
bricht sie im Vorübergehen wie eine Frucht"; und der Nachbar rechts, sagte er nicht: "Er  
greift sie wie der Aar das Lamm." Ich war schon fern, doch es ging wie zwei kleine  
scharfe Stiche durch meine Ohren, und ich fühle sie noch. Der Wagen rollte vorwärts,

Lüfte wehten über mir, ich lag in Mänteln, in Decken; da der Frühling noch nicht ganz erwacht, lagen sie reichlich umher.

Halb berührte mich des Kaisers Arm, und sein Antlitz starrte kalt in die strömende Luft, als hätte die Sonne die Erde nicht verloren, als hätte keine Mutter ihr Kind verloren, als wäre nichts gescheh'n – wie eine Gemme. Die Haare aber flogen rückwärts.

**Nero** (gespannt):

Nun, Laïs!

**Laïs:**

O der Kaiser ist herrlich, groß ist der Kaiser, – war er das nicht?

**Nero:**

Nun, reizende Laïs.

**Laïs:**

Als du mich dort zum ersten Male unter jenem blühenden Baume fandest, bei diesem ersten Kuß, Nero –

(unbeschreiblich reizend.) Laß den Sklaven leben.

**Nero** (wüthend):

Daß du von der Erde schwändest, du schnellzüngige Schlange, du Wurm, du kleine glatte Kröte du, unter meiner Sohle ist Raum für dich. (sie läuft dicht auf ihn zu.)

Was bringst du meine Nerven in eine Regung, wo sie mir das Mahl verderben, und abgebunden sind, – nach dem Herzen zu, laß dich lieber aufhängen, und dann zerschlitzen wie einen Sack, auf daß deine Weisheit allseitige Wege finde.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Ihr Götter, der Kaiser grausam immer, aber so wild ist er nicht oft.

Laß dein Geschrei, Weib.

**Laïs** (an Nero geschmiegt, der sie halb fortstößt):

Nero, o Männchen, was ist dir!

**Nero** (plötzlich rauh und hart, aber ruhig):

Du hast mir die Laune verdorben, was soll ich nun bis zum Mahle machen.

**Laïs:**

Und der Sklave?

**Nero:**

Beim Jupiter, der stirbt.

**Der Sklave** (von der Seite leise):

Laïs, Laïs, Laïs!

**Laïs** (immer hingebender):

So will ich denn tanzen, um dich zu erheitern, Nero, da kömmt die Lust zum Mahle wieder. – Laß den Sklaven, wir wollen nicht mehr an ihn denken.



**Nero:**

Laß ab von mir!

**Laïs:**

O noch so zornig. Nero sieh – sieh, dort fliegen Tauben, so groß wie eine Schar von Geiern – am Saum des Fensters. (Sie thut als sehe sie dort welche, er sieht hin, sie küßt schnell seine Schulter.) Ha, siehst du, du lachst – nun mußt du mir wieder gut sein.

**Nero:**

Mache was du willst – schreie, zanke, nur etwas, daß die Zeit zum Mahl vergeht. – Gestern Abend brannte ich beim Wettspiel lebendige Fackeln ab – die konnten leuchten; es waren Sklaven, ganz in Theer getränkt – heute ist nun die Erregung schon vorüber – und ich bin ganz ermüdet, schlaff und öde.

**Laïs:**

Sieh, du bist wieder gut, ganz sanft und gut – aber immer noch wie ein wildes Thier, das man im Laufe wider seinen Willen hemmt, – du athmest, zitterst noch an allen Gliedern, – und ich werde tanzen und dich wieder beruhigen – nicht?

**Nero:**

(gleichgültig, während sie sich schon ihm gegenüber in der Nähe der Statue und der Stühle blitzschnell zum Tanzen anschickt).

Denk an dein großes Herz, o Laïs!

**Laïs:**

Oeffne deine Augen, mein Kaiser, und sieh zu wie dies große Herz zu tanzen und zu springen versteht.

Erinnerst du dich noch, wie ich einst lauschte, als der Antonio die Geschichte der Psyche zur Lyra vortrug? Was ich da empfand – das will ich dir vortanzen.

Psyche, die Königstochter, ist durch ein Orakel dem unbekannten Mann vermählt, weiß nicht, daß es ein Gott ist, da er nur Nachts in ihrer Nähe weilte.

O weh, nun kommt's! Die Schwestern, die sie in der Einsamkeit besuchen, legen den Argwohn in ihr Herz, er sei ein Ungeheuer, und sie solle wider sein Gebot ihn Heimlich zu erblicken suchen.

(Sie wirft plötzlich allen Schmuck zu Boden, und steht in ihrem einfachen weißen Gewand wie verwandelt da.)

Gieb Acht, Amor entschlief, von seiner Schönheit, seiner lieblichen Rede trunken lauscht sie seinen Athemzügen (sie macht am Boden sitzend die Pantomime); da kehrt der grausame Gedanke wieder, den jene ihr ins Herz gelegt. – Du sahst ihn nie, er ist ein Ungeheuer.

(Laïs schrickt zusammen, dann schüttelt sie mit dem Kopf und lauscht wieder, das Antlitz voll Seligkeit; sie hebt das Händchen ans Ohr, um seine Athemzüge noch genauer zu hören – plötzlich zuckt der dunkle Gedanke aufs neue durch ihr Antlitz, sie

erhebt sich leise, schleicht hinweg, und kehrt mit einer Lampe vom Altar im Hintergrund der Bühne zurück, mit der sie schüchtern, stieren Auges auf die Stätte zugeht, wo, ihrem Begriffe nach, Amor liegt.)

**Der Hausmeister:**

Ah trefflich! Sieh, o Kaiser, Psyche kömmt mit der Lampe und sucht den Gatten zu erblicken, weibische Neugier ganz im Angesicht.

**Nero** (nickt gemessen).

(Laïs geht immer näher auf Amor zu, ihr Fuß zuckt, als wolle sie zurück, – plötzlich fällt ein Strahl der Lampe auf Amor's Antlitz, seine Schönheit leuchtet wie ein Blitz durch ihre Seele; sie erkennt, daß es ein Gott ist, der Wechsel der Bewegungen, der innige Dank den Göttern mit der Seligkeit, die sie fast aufwärts trägt, sind unbeschreiblich.)

**Der Hausmeister** (gelassen und ganz versunken):

Sie hat im Amor statt dem Ungeheuer den Gott erkannt. – Ich hörte viel von diesen Spielen am Hof zu Rom, und sah dergleichen nie, um so erfreulicher muß mir es sein; ich sehe mit Begier dem Tanze zu.

**Nero:**

So wird dich's leicht befriedigen.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Die kleine runde Laïs, eben düster noch und traurig, lacht sie so hell, so süß beim Anblick ihres Gatten, daß ich es Vielen gönnte, sie könnte durch ihr Weinen so die Herzen rühren, wie jene durch ihr Lachen. – – Nicht so? Das Lachen klingt als stände in Wahrheit ein Gott vor dieses Mädchens Seele. – Sieh nur, Laïs' Freude geht in Spielereien über, sie berührt zögernd seine Flügel, sie fährt zurück, – sie ist außer sich vor Glück und Thränen stürzen über ihre errötheten Wangen, daß ein Gott sie liebt, sie aufwärts trägt, o dieser Stolz.

**Nero:**

Stolz! – die Narrheit.

**Der Hausmeister:**

O wunderbar, wie seltsam sieht dies Mädchen aus, die Leidenschaft scheint also mächtig in ihr erwacht, daß ich bekenne, wie ich selber dergleichen nie empfinden könnte, und ganz unmöglich schien mir bisher, was ich nun sehe. Eine Gluth, wie sie am Abend oft der weißen Alpen gewalt'ge Berge tief erglühn läßt – so tief und roth, so schuldlos weiß und dann allmächtig über alle Lande ausgebreitet, scheint über sie dahin zu ziehen – o ich staun' es an, als könnte sie den Amor ganz umschließen, ganz bedecken mit diesem reichen Purpur und dem Gold, aus ihrer reinen Seele Grund, – sieh nur, sie wird vollkommen schön, und göttlich werden ihre Züge, ganz jung, wie zwanzig Jahr, und jünger noch.

(Plötzlich halt Laïs die Lampe dicht über ihn, den Athem anhaltend, ihn zu küssen; die Lampe entfällt ihrer Hand, sie fährt zurück. Man sieht, daß sie vor seinem aufspringenden Anblick kniet und bebt.)

Ha! Sieh wie auserlesen – o Nero, sie hat den Gott erweckt, man sieht's! Und mehr – und er wird sie verlassen.

**Nero** (bewegter):

Das ist sehr gut, – sieh wie sie seine Reden abwehrt.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Wie sie zerschmettert ist, ihre Unschuld beschwört; nur ihn sehen, nicht ihn tödten wollte sie; wie bittet sie, doch er wird fliehen.

So liegt sie jammernd.

**Nero** (heftig):

Doch noch einmal reißt sie's empor, sie will ihn halten.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Und Amor ist entflohen; sie redet nicht, sie klagt nicht, aber all dies Glück von seiner Nähe, selbst wenn er zürnt, unendlich Glück, entweicht fortschwindend sanft, gleich einem Schein, aus ihren edlen und erhabnen Zügen, und leer erscheint das ganze Antlitz. – –

Ist diese ein Menschenwerk, den Aug' und Mund bleibt unbeweglich, oder sind es die edlen Schatten der geliebten Geister, die über ihr Gesicht wie über jene starren Uferfelsen des Styr hinstreifen und die öde Welt verlassen.

Ja ihr Götter, ja – das ist herrlich, doch er ist fort, und sie wird suchen in ihrem Schmerz und sei's die Reise über alle Welt.

(Laïs liegt jammernd am Boden, ihr Schmerz, ihre Scham, ihre Leidenschaft; sie beschließt ihn zu suchen, sie erhebt sich und umwandelt drei Mal im rasenden, schmerzhaften, pantomimischen Tanz die Bühne, als wäre es eine Wüste, – bald steht sie und sieht weit und hoffnungslos umher, als sehe sie nirgends wo etwas, – bald schreitet sie bittend weiter.)

Sie tanzt, – wie tanzt sie? Ja man merkt's daß dieses springend leichte Blut in ihr geboren, so leicht, man sieht die Füße nicht am Boden, so wenig man der Halmen Schäfte sieht, wenn übers Ährendfeld der Wind hinzieht, und Schlangen gleich die zarten Linien erst in der weiten Ferne schwinden.

**Nero:**

Sie hat lange nicht getanzt, die Laïs.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Sieh – sieh – bald ist sie hier, bald dort, wie in der Frühlingszeit das  
Himmelslicht hinblitzend über eine weite Ebne streift, und zeigt wo Wasser ist bis hin  
zum Horizont – die Schritte aber, die dazwischen liegen, die zählt ihm keiner nach.

(Laïs eilt immer weiter, bald scheint ein Hoffnungsstrahl sie zu durchdringen,  
und bald ist er verloren, nun schmerzen ihre Sohlen und sie sinkt zusammen.)

**Nero** (kalt):

Ermüd't sinkt sie zusammen und ruht.

**Der Hausmeister** (wie dahingerafft):

Ach sie fiel so leicht hernieder wie eine Blüthe, die vom lautgedehnten Sange  
Philomelens zu tief erschüttert schon, in eine finstre weiche Nacht und in den traurig  
hellen Schein des Monds versinkt.

(Wieder reizt es Laïs empor, immer weiter, – sie klagt den Sternen ihren Jammer;  
sie fragt die öden Felsen, den Wald, die nur mit den öden Lauten der Natur ihr  
antworten; sie bittet ermattet um Hülfe, die sie nicht findet, und endlich immer  
ermatteter scheint sie an einem Ziele anzulangen.)

Nun kömmt sie zu der Venus, und fragt nach ihm, – ist es nicht so, – und jene  
wird ihr befehlen, die Büchse aus der Unterwelt zu holen, dann soll ihr Amor werden,  
wenn nicht die Neugier sie die Büchse öffnen läßt.

Sieh, wie Venus sie verachtet, wie die buhlerische Schönheit so keck die Unschuld anstarrt, die die Menschen und der Sohn noch schöner fanden, als der Mutter reichliches Wesen. Sieht man nicht Psyche an, was jene denkt.

**Nero:**

Ja besser ist's, daß Männer eine Frau betrachten, denn ihre Kühnheit wird Bewunderung und schützt das Weib, als wenn ein böses Weib die Unschuld anblickt, dem sie nur eine Waare deucht, je feiner um so höher auch im Preis.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Wahrlich, sie steht dort still in ihrer Unschuld vor der Venus, wie Sterne still am Himmel stehen, und dennoch sieht man sie so furchtsam zitternd schimmern, als wäre sie voll ewiger Bewegung.

O sie wird ganz unschuldig, – diese gute Laïs, als hätte sie nichts Böses je berührt. Reiner, heller wie die Venus, als sie aus ihrer Muschel einst dem Meer entstieg, und nimmer noch die holde Wange sich tiefer gefärbt, die nur vom rauhen Rand der Muschel leis verletzt, und darum nur geröthet.

**Laïs** (steht aufathmend, höhnisch für sich):

Unschuldig werde ich vielleicht, weil ich bedenke wie diese Unschuld einem Gott gefiele, – den Laïs nimmer sah.

**Der Hausmeister:**



Unschuld'ger, wie die ersten weißen Blumen des milden Frühlings, die aus den schwarzen Schollen, wie so der Milchzahn eines jungen Kindes, zum Himmel weinen, als wollten sie der Wolken weiße Brüste so durstig saugend, um den Regen zu bitten.

(Laïs tanzt. Ihre Schüchternheit vor der Venus, ihr Erschrecken, als jene sie verhöhnt, demüthig will sie alles thun, um Amor zu Erlangen. Als Venus sie gehen heißt, drückt sie das durch furchtsames Erschrecken aus, und deutet fragend auf den Boden [die Unterwelt]. Schaudernd entschließt sie sich hinabzugehen. Ihr Weg ihr Entsetzen, Schatten fangen an sie zu umgeben, ihr Schaudern wird fast zur Raserei, – der Cerberus, sie umschreibt mit der Hand seine Köpfe, und mit dem Gesicht seine Gier, und thut als würde sie ihm etwas zu. Sie ahmt die Geberden der Danaïden nach, welche immer aufs neue Wasser in ihre durchlöcherten Krüge füllen, darüber namenloses Staunen und Elend in ihren Zügen – die Furien. Ganz voll sinnberaubenden Entsetzens über alles Gesehene erhält sie [am Altar, welcher, wie wir gesagt, links im Hintergrund der Bühne steht, und auf welchen sie zugegangen ist und ein goldnes Gefäß mit einem Deckel dort nimmt] die Büchse vom König der Unterwelt.)

**Nero:**

(während all diesen plötzlich ganz außer sich Entzücken).

**Der Hausmeister:**

Der Cerberus

**Nero:**

(Bewußtlos und vertraut an jenen gelehnt und ihn umschlungen haltend).

Die Danaïden, dies ist ein Spiel für Götter; herrlich Laïs! Herrlich! (Er wirft ihr eine Kette und einen Armreifen zu, die sie unbeachtet läßt.)

**Der Hausmeister:**

Die Furien! O den Gott zu finden überwindet die Psyche alles.

**Laïs** (still stehend um auszuathmen, für sich):

Die Psyche suchte rastlos, irrte umher und trug doch einen Gott im Herzen; ich suche rastlos und habe nichts zu finden, öde ist der Weg und voller Schrecken, öde diese Welt, leer bis zum Horizont hinauf. O dürfte er dann leben – wär's möglich, er stände hinter mir.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Nun steht sie still. Horch, es ist als wenn sie jetzt Amor's gedächte, um sich zu stärken; sie sieht ihn in Gedanken, o sie faltet die Hände über ihrem Haupt zusammen und sinkt dann rückwärts nun an seine Brust hernieder, als wär' er dort.

Wenn wir am Himmel auf den Wolkenbühnen uns Götter, göttlich schöne Menschen dächten, und dann in ihrer Mitte wäre Psyche, welche zum ersten Mal im Gatten den Gott umarmt, und sich ihm hingiebt, so wär' es dieser Anblick.

**Laïs** (steht still und fasst an ihr Herz):

O welch ein Schwindel! – doch es ist besser wieder, hell und licht.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Weißt du, o Kaiser, wie sich die Ägypter auf Steine und auf Sattelzug das  
Zeichen ewigen Lebensgruben? –

So lasse dir auf einen edlen Stein die Stellung schneiden, denn mir erschien sie  
als ein voller seliger Begriff, wie sich ein jeder seinem Gott ergeben möchte.

Doch was ist der Laïs, du stockst, du tanzt nicht weiter?

**Laïs:**

Sag mir, was denkst du denn vom Tod.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Wie kommst du jetzt darauf. Ich wüßte es dir so schnell hier nicht zu sagen; –  
später.

**Laïs.**

Sehr lang' ist später. – Ich will dir sagen, was ich denke. Der Tod erscheint mir  
wie ein Trank, bei dem das Schlucken sauer wird, doch sieh, er selber – schmeckt sicher  
süß, weil er den Durst des Lebens endlich stillt.

Sieh – sieh die Schatten, die grauen bleichen Schatten.

**Der Hausmeister:**

Die Schatten – die Furien in sinnenberaubenden Entsetzen darüber, scheint sie zu schwanken.

**Laïs** (still stehend, mit erschreckter Geberde für sich):

O Kaiser, du erscheinst mir wie ein Schatten mit großen Flecken, der nimmermehr das Licht der Sonne sah, noch sehen wird, weil er sich all so dicht drauf gewälzt, daß ihr kein Strahl für ihn entrinnt.

**Nero:**

Die Furien – ha! Mein Haar sträubt sich empor. O Laïs, göttliche Laïs! Nun hat sie das Gefäß und kehrt zurück. (Er wirft ihr noch einen Reif zu.) O ich will dich belohnen; du sollst die Erste meiner Tänzerinnen werden, denn dein Talent beginnt zu wachsen, weit über allem das ich sah.

**Laïs** (vor sich hin):

Wie die Sonne, wenn sie untergeht.

Ich wittre Abendluft, so feucht und kühl! O Kaiser.

(Laïs kehrt mit dem Gefäß vom Altar zurück.)

**Der Hausmeister:**

O Herr! O Laïs! Ihr köstlich Haar hängt schlaff herab – und mit erhobenem Antlitz den Blick nach oben gerichtet, so kehrt sie, als sei sie aller Schrecken gewohnt – langsam und göttergleich zurück.

Ich weiß nicht, Kaiser, es faßt mich ein Erbarmen – als hätte ich dergleichen nie gefühlt.

(Laïs sinkt vor dem Stuhl des Kaisers zusammen, öffnet das Gefäß und reicht ihm daraus kindlich aber gebrochen ein Paar Rosen.)

**Nero:**

Was willst du für dein Gegengeschenk für deine Schönheit, Weib, Mädchen! Du spielst besser als ich's vermochte. Fordre mein halbes Kaiserreich, ich bin bei Laune, es dir zu geben.

**Laïs:**

(welche sich wieder erhoben und ein Paar Schritte zurückgetreten, bleibt plötzlich stehen – gebrochen und außer Athem, aber göttlich).

Den Sklaven.

[play goes on, Nero frees the slave, Laïs dies due to having danced despite her heart condition].

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## Biography

**Katharina Uhde**, born in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, began playing the violin at the age of six. She holds MMS and DMA degrees from Michigan (with Prof. Stephen Shipps) and an Artist Diploma from the University of Music, Karlsruhe, where she studied with Ulf Hoelscher. She founded the Viktor Ullmann Quartet in 1998, which won 1st prize at the *International Competition Concertino Praga*, 1st prize in the *International Competition Verfemte Musik*, and 2nd prize in the *International Competition Charles Hennen*. She has appeared as a soloist with the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Baden-Baden Philharmonic, the Goettinger Musikfreunde Orchestra, the Marburg University Orchestra, the Belgrade University Orchestra, and, most recently, the Natal Symphony Orchestra, with whom she performed the Beethoven Violin Concerto in September 2013. In 2012 she performed the cycle of Beethoven's violin sonatas several times in the United States with R. Larry Todd, which is being recorded in 2014-2015 supported by a Duke Collaborative Artist's grant for 2014. She has toured as a soloist, chamber musician, and lecture recitalist through Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Serbia, Montenegro, Israel, and Brazil. In May 2013 her first CD appeared featuring romantic Brazilian piano trio repertory. Uhde has held a guest teaching position at UNC Chapel Hill, before accepting in 2014 a position as Assistant Professor for Violin and Musicology at Valparaíso University, beginning in August 2014. For the



first chapter of her dissertation Uhde received the Karl Geiringer Award of the American Brahms Society. The Baden-Baden Brahms Museum Research fellowship (2014) allowed her to spend two weeks in the Brahms House Baden-Baden. Lastly, Uhde received Duke fellowships for archive-related travel in 2013 and 2014.